



**ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN
FOR THE HOUSING CHOICE
VOUCHER PROGRAM**

**Housing Authority of the
County of Riverside**

April 2008

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Chapter 1

STATEMENT OF POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

The Section 8 Program was enacted as part of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, which re-codified the U.S. Housing Act of 1937. The Act has been amended from time to time, and its requirements are described in, and implemented through this Administrative Plan.

Administration of the Section 8 Program and the functions and responsibilities of the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside (HA) staff shall be in compliance with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Section 8 Regulations as well as federal, state and local fair housing laws and regulations.

The HA is committed to the goals and policies contained in the Housing Element of the General Plan for the County of Riverside and the County of Riverside Consolidated Plan.

A. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of the Administrative Plan is to establish policies for carrying out the programs in a manner consistent with HUD requirements and local objectives. The Plan covers both admission and continued participation in these programs.

The HA is responsible for complying with all changes in HUD regulations pertaining to these programs. If such changes conflict with this Plan, HUD regulations will have precedence.

B. SERVICE POLICY/ACCOMMODATIONS

This policy is applicable to all situations described in this Administrative Plan when a family initiates contact with the HA, when the HA initiates contact with a family including when a family applies, and when the HA schedules or reschedules appointments of any kind.

It is the policy of this HA to be customer service oriented in the administration of our housing programs, and to exercise and demonstrate a high level of professionalism while providing housing services to the families within our jurisdiction.

The HA's policies and practices are designed to provide assurances that all persons with disabilities will be provided reasonable accommodations so that they may have equal access to the housing programs and related services. Persons requiring special accommodations due to a disability must notify the HA of their needs.

In matters where the HA has discretion, waivers to existing policy shall be determined by the Assistant Director or designee.

C. TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTS

The Housing Authority will translate documents into other languages when feasible.

D. FAMILY OUTREACH

It is the goal of the HA to assure that participating families in the program are representative of the County's targeted population groups, as identified in the Consolidated Plan of its area of operation. The HA will publicize and disseminate information to make known the availability of housing assistance and related services for low income families on an as needed basis. The HA will publicize the availability and nature of housing assistance for low income families in a newspaper of general circulation, minority media, and by other suitable means (such as distributing information to non-profit agencies within the county).

E. PRIVACY RIGHTS AND PROVIDING INFORMATION TO OWNERS

The HA's policy regarding release of information is in accordance with state and local laws which restricts the release of family information.

The HA's practices and procedures are designed to safeguard the privacy of applicants, program participants, and participating owners or property managers. All applicant and participant hard files and imaged files will be stored in a secure location that is only accessible by authorized staff. Owner records will be filed with the participant's file but will be removed from the file prior to the participant reviewing it.

In accordance with HUD requirements, the HA will furnish prospective owners with the names and addresses of current and prior landlords of applicants and participants for tenant screening purposes.

F. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The HA practices equal opportunity in hiring, promotion and conditions of employment. The HA will comply with the equal opportunity housing requirements in regard to non-discrimination in housing.

G. SPECIAL HOUSING TYPES

The HA routinely provides Manufactured home space rental assistance and will provide Shared Housing, Single Room Occupancy (SRO), Congregate housing, group home and/or cooperative housing assistance as a reasonable accommodation to applicants and participants who request it in order to make the program more accessible. Except where specifically regulated, all HA policies in this Administrative Plan also apply to the special housing types.

H. RULES AND REGULATIONS

This Administrative Plan is set forth to define the HA's local policies for operation of the housing programs in the context of federal laws and regulations. All issues related to Section 8 not addressed in this document are governed by such federal regulations, HUD memos, notices and guidelines, or other applicable law.

I. JURISDICTION

The HA's area of operation is all of the incorporated and unincorporated cities and areas in Riverside County.

J. MONITORING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

The HA will monitor program performance in compliance with the Annual Contributions Contract and other applicable laws, regulations and guidelines. It is the agency's objective to receive the highest rating from HUD using the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP).

The HA will monitor Housing Quality Standards (HQS) in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations 24 CFR Part 982, by conducting quality control inspections in an amount necessary to meet HUD requirements.

K. INTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW OPERATIONS

The Housing Authority of the County of Riverside administers an Internal Program Review Operations (IPRO) program. The purpose of the program is to ensure that public funds are paid only on behalf of qualified and eligible participants, and to landlords and owners who comply with all contract provisions in accordance with federal regulations.

IPRO staff investigates any suspected program abuse or misconduct. In addition to conducting investigations into suspected program abuse, conferences are conducted with participants, owners, and employees suspected of violating program requirements. Conferences reinforce the obligation to comply with program regulations. IPRO staff conducts independent inspections and random audits of housing assistance files. Confirmation and verification of participant information and housing quality are obtained by visual inspection and file examination.

IPRO also staffs a toll-free fraud hotline. Through this hotline, the public can anonymously report any suspected participant/owner/employee fraud. The fraud hotline number is available through the internet web site, as a telephone option when calling the office and Housing Authority newsletters.

The HA actively pursues collection through court procedures from both landlords and participants who have violated program rules. The HA collaborates with the Office of Inspector General and local law enforcement agencies to pursue criminal convictions for program fraud.

L. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION FROM FILES

The HA will make records available to individuals and organizations with legitimate purposes. In order not to cause a financial burden on the HA, charges for this information will be 25 cents per page for photocopies, and \$20 per hour for staff time in locating and gathering information. If the file is stored in archives, an additional \$35 fee will be charged to request it from storage.

M. USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE FEE RESERVE

The HA Board of Commissioners must authorize any withdrawal from administrative fee reserves proposed through the annual budget approval process. The Board of Commissioners must authorize any amount in excess of \$75,000 per occurrence that is used during the fiscal year in addition to the previously approved amount.

N. CODE OF CONDUCT

All employees are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct for the Housing Authority, which is included as Appendix B of this document.

Chapter 2

ELIGIBILITY FOR ADMISSION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter defines the HUD and HA criteria for admission and denial of admission to the program. The policy of the HA is to strive for objectivity and consistency in applying these criteria to evaluate the eligibility of families who apply. The HA staff will review all information provided by the family carefully and without regard to factors other than those defined in this chapter. Families will be provided the opportunity to explain their circumstances, to furnish additional information, if needed, and to receive an explanation of the basis for any decision made by the HA pertaining to their eligibility.

To be eligible for participation, an applicant must meet HUD criteria, as well as any permissible additional criteria established by the HA, i.e., Amended Policy on Zero Tolerance of Criminal Activity (see Appendix C), and established local preferences (see Chapter 4).

The family's initial eligibility for placement on the waiting list will be made in accordance with the eligibility factors.

A. QUALIFICATION AS A FAMILY

The applicant must qualify as a family. A family may be a single person or a group of persons.

A group of persons may be:

Two or more persons sharing residency whose combined income and resources are available to meet the household needs, or who have evidence of a stable family relationship.

Two or more elderly or disabled persons living together, or one or more elderly or disabled persons living with one or more live-in aides is a family.

A minor who is temporarily away from home because of placement in foster care is considered a member of the family. This provision only pertains to the child's temporary absence from the home, and is not intended to enlarge the space available for other family members.

A minor whose custody has been awarded by the court to the family or whose legal guardianship has been awarded by the court to the family, is considered a member of the family.

A single person may be:

- An elderly person
- A displaced person
- A person with a disability
- Any "other single" person

Head of Household

The head of household is the adult member of the household who is designated by the family, is wholly or partly responsible for paying the rent, and has the legal capacity to enter into a lease under state/local law. Emancipated minors who qualify under state law may be recognized as the head of household.

Live-In Aide

A family that consists of one or more elderly or disabled persons may request that the HA approve a live-in aide to reside in the unit and provide necessary supportive services for a family member who is a person with disabilities. The HA must approve a live-in aide if needed as a reasonable accommodation in accordance with 24 CFR Part 8 to make the program accessible to and usable by the family member with a disability. A statement from a medical professional supporting the need for a Live-In Aide will be required. This medical statement must be renewed every year at the annual recertification.

Live-in aide means a person who resides with one or more elderly persons, or persons with disabilities, and who:

1. Is determined by the HA to be essential to the care and well being of an elderly person or a person with disabilities,
2. Is not obligated for the support of the person(s),
3. Would not be living in the unit except to provide the necessary supportive services.

A live-in aide is treated differently than family members:

1. Income of the live-in aide will not be counted for purposes of determining eligibility or level of benefits.
2. Live-in aides will not be considered as a remaining household member of the tenant family or be entitled to any housing assistance independent of the participant and will sign a certification to that effect.

At any time, the HA may refuse to approve a particular person as a live-in aide, or may withdraw such approval, if:

1. The person commits fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program;
2. The person violates the Amended Policy on Zero Tolerance of Criminal Activity; or
3. The person currently owes rent or other amounts to the HA or to another HA in connection with Section 8 or Public Housing Assistance under the 1937 Act;
4. If the live in aide requires a live in aid or care provider for themselves;
5. If the HOH requires a live in aide, the HOH may not be a live in aide/caretaker for someone else.

Multiple Families in the Same Household - Joint Custody of Children

When two families living together apply for assistance, (such as a mother and father and a daughter with her own husband or children), they will be treated as a single family unit.

Children who are subject to a joint custody agreement, but live with one parent at least 51 percent of the time will be considered members of the household. “51 percent of the time” is defined as 183 days of the year, which do not have to run consecutively.

When both parents are trying to claim the child, the HA will consider court records as the authority for custody. In the absence of court records, the parent whose address is listed in the school records will be allowed to claim the school-age child as a dependent and as a member of that household.

B. INCOME LIMITS

24 CFR 982.201 (b) (1)

HUD determines income limits for admission to the Section 8 Program. To be eligible, the applicant must be a family in any of the following categories:

- A very low-income family;
- A low-income family that is continuously assisted under the 1937 Housing Act. Any applicant is considered “continuously assisted” if the family is already receiving assistance under any 1937 Housing Act program when the family is admitted to the Voucher program. This definition would also include the Voucher period, up to a maximum of 120 days, between assisted units. Programs include Public Housing and all Section 8 programs.
- A low-income family physically displaced by rental rehabilitation activity under 24 CFR Part 511.
- A low-income non-purchasing family residing in a HOPE 1 or HOPE 2 project.
- A low-income non-purchasing family residing in a project subject to a homeownership program under 24 CFR Part 248.
- A low-income family displaced as a result of the prepayment of a mortgage or voluntary termination of a mortgage insurance contract under 24 CFR Part 248.
- A low-income family residing in a HUD-owned multifamily rental housing project when the project is sold, foreclosed or demolished by HUD.

C. DISCLOSURE OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

Families are required to provide verification of social security numbers for all family members, aged six and older prior to admission, if they have been issued a number by the Social Security Administration. This requirement also applies to persons joining the family after admission to the program. Failure to furnish verification of social security numbers is grounds for denial or termination of assistance.

CITIZENSHIP/ELIGIBLE IMMIGRATION STATUS

(24 CFR Part 5)

Mixed Families

An applicant family is eligible for assistance so long as at least one member is a citizen or eligible immigrant. Families that include eligible and ineligible individuals are called mixed households. Such applicant families will be given notice that their assistance will be prorated and that they may request a hearing if they contest this determination.

No eligible members

Applicant families that include no eligible members will be ineligible for assistance. Such families will be denied admission and offered an opportunity for a hearing.

Non-citizen students.

Non-citizen students as defined by HUD in the non-citizen regulations are not eligible for assistance.

Appeals

For this eligibility requirement only, the applicant is entitled to a hearing exactly like those provided for participants.

E. SUITABILITY OF FAMILY

It is the responsibility of the owner to screen the applicants as to their suitability for tenancy.

F. CHANGES IN ELIGIBILITY PRIOR TO EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE CONTRACT

Changes that occur after the issuance of a Voucher, but before the execution of a lease and contract must be processed. For example, if a household goes over the income limit prior to lease up, the applicant will not continue to be eligible for the program. They will be notified in writing of their ineligible status and their right to an informal review.

Changes that are reported will not affect the preference eligibility of the household once the preference criterion has been verified.

G. INELIGIBLE FAMILIES

Families who are determined to be ineligible will be notified in writing of the reason for denial and given an opportunity to request an informal review, or an informal hearing if they were denied due to non-citizen status.

Chapter 3

APPLYING FOR ADMISSION

INTRODUCTION

The HA Section 8 waiting list will close July 1, 2008, as the existing pool of applicants exceeds foreseeable resources. The waiting list will remain closed until such time as it is determined additional applicants are required to ensure full program utilization. Should the waiting list reopen, the HA will follow procedures in accordance with 24 CFR, 982.206. Public Notice will be given and outreach conducted to allow all those wishing to apply equal opportunity. This chapter describes the policies and procedures for completing the waiting list registration, placement on the waiting list, and completion of the Section 8 Application, including verifications and other required documents. Registrants will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with this Plan.

A. WAITING LIST REGISTRATION

At such time as the Section 8 waiting list reopens, public notice will be issued and outreach will be conducted on a continual basis by distribution of waiting list registration forms to libraries, non-profit organizations and other public agencies. Advertisement of the housing programs is done on an as needed basis in the local paper of record, minority newspapers, and other media.

Outreach and advertisement notices include:

1. A brief description of the housing programs
2. Basic information on eligibility requirements
3. The HA's address and telephone number

When the Section 8 waiting list is open, any family asking to be placed on the waiting list for Section 8 rental assistance must complete a registration form. Registrations will be taken by phone, on the Internet, by mail, by fax or by personal delivery to the HA offices. Upon request, reasonable accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities.

When the waiting list registration form is received by the HA, the applicant will receive a letter that confirms placement on the waiting list. The person whose name is listed on the registration will be considered the Head of Household and will be the person entitled to the placement on our waiting list. The letter will include instructions to verify information and report changes as they occur.

The purpose of the registration form is to permit the HA to determine placement on the waiting list based on the information provided by the applicant. Registrants are required to inform the HA of changes in family composition, income, and address, as well as any changes in their preference status (See Chapter 4). Registrants are also required to respond to requests from the HA to update information on their registration, or to determine their continued interest in assistance. Failure to provide information or to respond to mailings will result in the registrant being removed from the waiting list.

B. SECTION 8 APPLICATION

When funding is available, families will be sent a Section 8 Application according to their preference-determined sequence and by the date and time the registration was received by the HA. This process is followed regardless of family size.

The Section 8 Application and related verifications determines the family's ability to claim a preference and requires a signature. The qualification for preference must exist at the time the preference is verified regardless of the length of time an applicant has been on the waiting list because the preference is based on current status. If the family does not meet the current preferences, they are returned to the Waiting List.

If the family meets the preferences, they are sent an Eligibility Questionnaire, which includes the HUD Form 9886, Release of Information, and the declarations and consents related to citizenship/immigration status. All adult members must complete and sign these documents. The Eligibility Questionnaire is used to determine final eligibility for Voucher issuance and requires full verification.

Applicants will be required to sign specific verification forms requesting information that is not covered by the HUD Form 9886. Failure to do so will be cause for denial of the application for failure to provide necessary certifications and release as required by the HA.

If the HA utilizes an interview at the time of the full application, it is the applicant's responsibility to reschedule the interview if she/he misses the appointment. Appointments are rescheduled only if missing the appointment is justifiable and the request is made no later than 10 calendar days from the original appointment date. Requests for rescheduled appointments must be submitted in writing with verification (doctor's note, etc.) as to the reason for the reschedule. If the applicant does not reschedule a missed meeting, the HA will deny the application.

If the HA determines at or after the interview that additional information or document(s) are needed, the HA will request the document(s) or information in writing. The family will be given 10 calendar days to supply the information. If the information is not supplied in this time period, the HA will provide the family a notification of denial for assistance.

If an applicant is denied assistance, the applicant will be offered an opportunity to request an informal review.

Upon request, reasonable accommodations will be made for persons with a disability.

After the verification process is completed, the HA will make a final determination of eligibility. This decision is based upon information provided by the family, the verification completed by the HA, and the current eligibility criteria in effect. If the applicant is determined eligible, a briefing will be scheduled to issue a Voucher and explain the family's obligations and the program requirements.

During the initial eligibility determination process and any subsequent eligibility reexaminations, all contact such as correspondence, telephone calls, interviews, or inspections will be documented by the Housing Specialist.

Chapter 4

SELECTION OF FAMILIES FROM WAITING LIST

INTRODUCTION

It is the HA's objective to ensure that the families are placed in the proper order on the waiting list so that an offer of assistance is not delayed to any family, or made to any family prematurely.

This chapter defines the eligibility criteria for the HA, and it explains the waiting list order which the HA has adopted to meet local housing needs.

By maintaining an accurate waiting list, the HA will be able to perform the activities which ensure that an adequate pool of qualified registrants will be available so that program funds are used in a timely manner.

A. WAITING LIST PREFERENCES

The HA has implemented the following preferences for drawing names from the waiting list. In accordance with California State Law (HSC 34322.2), at each level of preference, veterans and servicepersons and their families will have priority. In accordance with Federal Regulations (24CFR 982.201 (b) (2)), at each level below, from the families that meet the preferences, the Housing Authority will release families to result in a lease up of: 75% of the families will be at or below 30% of the median income (extremely low income), and 25% of the families will be between 30% and 50% of the median income (very low income). If the first level releases do not satisfy the regulations regarding extremely low income families, releases will be done at the second level of preferences until the 75% extremely low income requirement is met. At the discretion of the Housing Authority, the waiting list may be opened and a selection made from registrants meeting the extraordinary local preference.

EXTRAORDINARY LOCAL PREFERENCE

Up to a total of 15% of annual admissions will be targeted for an extraordinary local preference for the following registrants: Referrals by the Court Program (A program run by Riverside County Family and Dependency Drug Courts); Foster Care Youth (A program of the Council for Youth Development); registrants that are extremely elderly (72 years or older); registrants displaced by government action or emergency as certified by a city, county or state agency official (executive level or above), etc. The approval of the Assistant Director or designee is necessary for an extraordinary local preference. **CFR 982.204 (a) and 982.207 (a) (2) and (3).**

FIRST LEVEL

- 1) County of Riverside Residency Preference, including homeless, and
- 2) Working Families with dependent or minor children or Elderly families or Disabled families

SECOND LEVEL

- 1) County of Riverside Residency Preference, including homeless, and
- 2) Non-Working Families with dependent or minor children

THIRD LEVEL

- 1) County of Riverside Residency Preference, including homeless, and
- 2) Working families without children

FOURTH LEVEL

- 1) County of Riverside Residency Preference, including homeless, and
- 2) Non-working families without children.

The Housing Authority will exhaust all families at each preference level before releasing from the next lower level except as noted above. Date and time of registration for registrants with equal preferences will determine order of release.

Change in Circumstances

Changes in a registrant's circumstances while on the waiting list may affect the family's entitlement to a preference. Registrants are required to notify the HA when circumstances change.

When a registrant claims an additional preference, she/he will maintain the original date of registration and will be placed on the waiting list in the appropriate order determined by the newly claimed preference. The qualification for preference must exist at the time the preference is verified regardless of the length of time an applicant has been on the waiting list because the preference is based on current status. Preference eligibility is verified at the time of completion of the Section 8 Application.

B. EXCEPTIONS FOR SPECIAL ADMISSIONS

CFR 982.203

If HUD awards an HA program funding that is targeted for a specific group, the HA will admit these families under a special admission procedure. The families will be selected in accordance with the Notice of Funding Availability and the HA's application for funding.

Special admissions families will be admitted outside of the regular waiting list process. They do not have to qualify for any preferences, nor are they required to be on the program waiting list. The HA maintains separate records of these admissions.

C. TARGETED FUNDING

When HUD awards special funding for certain family types, families who qualify are placed on the regular waiting list. When a specific type of funding becomes available, the waiting list is searched for the first family meeting the targeted funding criteria, based on time and date of registration.

Examples of targeted programs are:

- Disabilities/Mainstream
- Family Unification/Court Referrals
- Moderate Rehabilitation

D. ORDER OF SELECTION

Families are selected from the waiting list and sent a Section 8 Application based on the

preferences listed above. The waiting list will be organized by date and time among registrants with equal preference status regardless of family size. Preference information will be verified when families complete a Section 8 Application and the qualification for preference must exist at the time the preference is verified regardless of the length of time an applicant has been on the waiting list because the preference is based on current status.

E. PREFERENCE DENIAL

If the HA denies a preference, the HA will deny the family and return the family to the waiting list. The HA will notify the applicant in writing of the reasons why the preference was denied and that they will be returned to the waiting list and maintain the same position on the waiting list as before they were selected. If the applicant falsifies documents or makes false statements in order to qualify for any preference they will be denied assistance and offered an opportunity to request an informal review in writing within 10 days. Applicants may exercise other rights if they believe they have been discriminated against.

F. REMOVAL FROM WAITING LIST AND PURGING

If a registrant fails to respond within 30 calendar days to a mailing from the HA, the registrant will be removed from the waiting list. If a letter is returned by the Post Office without a forwarding address, the registrant will be removed without further notice, and a record will be maintained on the computer. Reasonable accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities.

The waiting list will be purged periodically by a mailing to registrants inquiring as to continued interest to be on the waiting list to ensure that the waiting list is current and accurate.

Chapter 5

SUBSIDY STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

HUD guidelines require that HA's establish subsidy standards for the determination of the Voucher bedroom size, and that such standards provide for a minimum commitment of subsidy while avoiding overcrowding. The standards used for the Voucher size also must be within the minimum unit size requirements of HUD's Housing Quality Standards. This chapter explains the subsidy standards which will be used to determine the Voucher size for various sized families when they are selected from the waiting list, as well as the HA's procedures when a family's size changes, or a family selects a unit size that is different from the Voucher.

A. DETERMINING VOUCHER SIZE

The HA does not determine who shares a bedroom/sleeping room, but there must be at least one person per subsidized bedroom. The HA's subsidy standards for determining Voucher size shall be applied in a manner consistent with Fair Housing guidelines.

All standards in this section relate to the number of bedrooms on the Voucher, not the family's actual living arrangements.

The unit size on the Voucher remains the same as long as the family composition remains the same, regardless of the actual unit size rented. The unit size on the Voucher (subsidy) may only change at the first full recertification after the change in family unit size. (24CFR 982.505 (c) (5))

One bedroom will be assigned to the head of the household and spouse or partner, and one bedroom will be assigned for each additional two persons. An unborn child (with verification of pregnancy) will be counted as a family member in determining bedroom size.

The HA will not issue a larger Voucher due to additions of family members other than by birth, adoption, marriage, or court-awarded custody. A larger bedroom size will not be issued if a member of the nucleus family moves out and returns as an adult, unless it is to offer a reasonable accommodation for a disabled family member. If a member returns as an adult and brings additional non-nucleus members with them, the voucher size does not increase. Adding additional non-nucleus members will not be approved if it causes the family to be under-housed.

Exceptions will be made in the documented cases of a live-in aide or as a reasonable accommodation to make the program accessible to and usable by the nucleus family member with a disability. The family unit size for any family consisting of a single person must be either a zero or a one-bedroom unit.

Any foster members who are in the home at the time of initial voucher issuance, at the time of relocation or at an annual re-examination, and are determined to be long-term placement, will be considered as family members in the determination of subsidy size. For the purpose of determining subsidy size, long-term placement is defined as 12 or more months.

B. CHANGES IN VOUCHER SIZE

Changes for Applicants and Participants:

The Voucher size is determined at the time of Voucher issuance by comparing the family composition to the HA subsidy standards. If an applicant or participant requires a change in the Voucher size, the following guidelines will apply:

Requests for Exception to Subsidy Standard

A family with a disabled family member may request that the HA grant an exception to the subsidy standard. The HA will approve the exception as a reasonable accommodation if the family demonstrates a nexus to the disability is present to make the program accessible to and usable by the family member with a disability. This will be verified through a third party licensed professional's verification. Verification of the need must be provided annually on a Housing Authority approved form.

Under-housed (unit too small for size of family)

If a unit does not meet HQS space standards due to an increase in family size by birth, adoption, court awarded custody or marriage, the HA will issue a new Voucher.

Over-housed (unit too large for size of family)

If a participant has a decrease in the family size, the family has the option to be issued a new Voucher or remain in the unit they are currently renting. If the family chooses to remain in the unit, the subsidy standard will be lowered at the next annual re-examination. If the family chooses to move, the Voucher will be issued with the correct subsidy standard. The amount the family pays for rent must be affordable and the tenant portion of rent and the current utility allowance cannot exceed 40% of their adjusted income at the time of lease up. The approved rent will be based on the payment standard for the number of bedrooms the family is eligible for, or the actual number of bedrooms in the unit, whichever is less. In cases where the gross rent is less than the payment standard, it will be used as the payment standard.

C. UNIT SIZE SELECTED

The family may select a different size unit than that listed on the Voucher using the HUD criteria for Payment Standards provided the unit is rent reasonable and affordable. The amount of assistance is based on the authorized or actual bedroom size, whichever is less.

Chapter 6

ELIGIBILITY FACTORS

INTRODUCTION

The accurate calculation of annual income and adjusted income will ensure that families are not paying more or less money for rent than their obligation under the regulations. This chapter defines the allowable deductions from annual income and how the presence or absence of household members may affect the Total Tenant Payment (TTP). Income and TTP are calculated in accordance with 24 CFR Part 5 and further instructions set forth in HUD Notices, Memoranda and Addenda. The formula for the calculation of TTP is specific and not subject to interpretation. The HA's policies in this chapter address those areas which allow the HA discretion to define terms and to develop standards in order to ensure consistent application of the various factors that relate to the determination of TTP.

A. HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

The HA must compute all applicable income of every family member, including those who are temporarily absent. In addition, the HA must count the income of the spouse or the head of the household if that person is temporarily absent, even if that person is not on the lease. If the spouse is temporarily absent and in the military, all military pay and allowances (except hazardous duty pay when exposed to hostile fire and any other exceptions to military pay that HUD may define) is counted as income.

Income of persons permanently absent will not be counted.

It is the responsibility of the head of household to report (in writing) changes in income and family composition within 10 calendar days.

The HA will evaluate absences from the unit using this policy.

Absence of Entire Family

These policy guidelines address situations when the family is absent from the unit, but has not moved out of the unit. In cases where the family has moved out of the unit, the HA will terminate the contract and/or the assistance in accordance with appropriate termination procedures contained in this Plan.

- Families are required to notify the HA before they move out of a unit.
- Families must notify the HA if they are going to be absent from the unit for more than three weeks.
- If it is determined that the family is absent from the unit, the HA will not continue assistance payments. "Absent" means that no family member is residing in the unit. In order to determine if the family is absent from the unit, the HA may, but is not limited to:
 - Write letters to the family at the unit
 - Telephone the family at the unit
 - Interview neighbors

- Verify if utilities are in service
- Contact the landlord
- Conduct special inspections

If the absence which resulted in termination of assistance was due to a person's disability, and the HA can verify that the person was unable to notify the HA in accordance with the family's responsibilities, and if funding is available, the HA may reinstate the family if an accommodation is requested by the family.

Absence of Any Member

Any member of the household will be considered permanently absent if she/he is away from the unit for 183 days in a 12 month period, except as otherwise provided in this chapter.

Absence due to Medical Reasons

Housing Assistance Payments may continue up to six months when the subsidized unit is vacant due to hospitalization. However, hospitalization more than one month requires written medical verification that there is a reasonable expectation the person will be able to return to independent living within the six-month period. The participant's share of the rent must be paid during the hospitalization period. If the person who is determined to be permanently absent is the sole member of the household, assistance will be terminated in accordance with the HA's "Absence of Entire family" policy.

Foster care and Absences of Children

If the family includes a child or children temporarily absent from the home due to placement in foster care, the HA will determine from the appropriate agency when the child/children will be returned to the home.

Any foster children or foster adults who are in the home at the time of initial voucher issuance, at the time of relocation or, at an annual re-examination, and are determined to be long term placement, will be considered as family members in the determination of subsidy size. For the purpose of determining subsidy size, long-term placement is defined as 12 or more months.

Temporary Caretaker for Children

If neither parent remains in the household, and the appropriate agency has determined that another adult is to be brought into the assisted unit to care for the children for an indefinite period, the HA will treat that adult as a visitor for the first 180 days.

If the appropriate agency cannot confirm the guardianship status of the caretaker, the HA will review the status at six month intervals. If custody or legal guardianship has not been awarded by the court, but the action is in process, the HA will secure verification from social services staff or the attorney as to the status.

After 180 days the HA will approve a person to reside in the unit as caretaker for the child/children, and the income will be counted pending a final disposition. The HA will transfer the Voucher to the caretaker for as long as his/her services are required. The HA will work with the appropriate service agencies and the landlord to provide a smooth transition in these cases.

When court-awarded custody or legal guardianship has been awarded to the caretaker, the Voucher will be transferred to the caretaker until the child/children become able to care for themselves. In no case will the caretaker be eligible to become the remaining member.

Absent Adult

If a member of the household is subject to a court order that restricts him/her from the home for more than six months then the person will be considered permanently absent.

The family will be required to notify the HA in writing within 10 calendar days when an adult family member moves out. The notice must contain a certification by the family as to whether the adult is temporarily or permanently absent.

If an adult child goes into the military and leaves the household, or moves out of the household to attend and live elsewhere for college, they will be considered permanently absent.

Visitors

Any person not included on the HUD 50058 who has been in the unit more than 14 consecutive days, or a total of 30 days in a 12-month period (unless the lease is more restrictive), will be considered to be living in the unit as an unauthorized household member.

Minors and college student family members who live away from the home and who visit up to 182 days per year will be considered eligible visitors (subject to the lease agreement), not family members, and will not be counted in determining the subsidy standard for the family. Eligible visitors must be reported to and approved by the HA prior to visiting the home.

Reporting Changes in Household Composition to Owner and HA

Reporting changes in household composition to the HA is both a HUD and a HA requirement. The family must submit a written request prior to adding household members. Any person who moves into the assisted unit without written approval from the Housing Authority will be considered an unauthorized household member. Additions to the household by birth, adoption or court-awarded custody must be reported in writing to the HA within 10 calendar days. In addition, the family must obtain prior written approval from the owner when there are members and/or live-in aides added to the household.

If a family member leaves the household, the family must report this change to the HA, in writing, within 10 calendar days of the change and certify as to whether the member is temporarily absent or permanently absent. The HA will conduct an interim evaluation for changes in accordance with the interim policy. The HA may require verification of the family member's new address.

B. INCOME, ALLOWANCES AND MINIMUM FAMILY CONTRIBUTION

HUD regulations define incomes and allowances. The HA will include and exclude income in accordance with 24 CFR Part 5.

There is no minimum rent in the housing programs. The rent is based on the household income in

accordance with HUD regulations.

Averaging Income

The HA may average income when the income cannot be anticipated using verified sources for a full 12 months.

Income changes from Welfare

CFR 5.615 (b)

The HA will not decrease the family's share of the rent when there is a reduction in welfare benefits that is due to fraud or failure to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program or comply with a work activities requirement.

This prohibition on reduction of assistance is applicable only if the welfare reduction is neither the result of the expiration of a lifetime time limit on receiving benefits, nor a situation where the family has complied with welfare program requirements but cannot obtain employment (e.g., the family has complied, but loses welfare because of a durational time limit such as a cap on welfare benefits for a period of no more than two years in a five year period).

Minimum Income

There is no minimum income requirement.

Pro-ration of Assistance for "Mixed" Families

Pro-ration of assistance must be offered to any "mixed" applicant or participant family, provided other eligibility criteria are met. A "mixed" family is one that includes at least one U.S. citizen or eligible immigrant and any number of ineligible members.

Utility Allowance and Utility Reimbursement Payments

The Utility Allowance is not a payment issued to the family (except as noted below). It is intended to help defray the cost of utilities not included in the rent and is included in the calculation of the family's rent to the landlord. A Utility Reimbursement payment is made to the participant family in the amount by which the HAP payment exceeds the rent to owner. When there is a Utility Reimbursement, the HA pays the full amount of rent to the owner and sends the participant family, or a utility company, a utility reimbursement payment. This occurs only rarely, usually when a participant family has no income.

Chapter 7

VERIFICATION PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

HUD regulations (24 CFR 982.516(a)) require that the factors of eligibility and Total Tenant Payment (TTP) be verified by the HA. Applicants and program participants must furnish proof of their eligibility whenever required by the HA, and the information they provide must be true and complete. The HA's verification requirements are designed to maintain program integrity. This chapter explains the HA's procedures and standards for verification of preferences, income, combined assets exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1000.00), allowable deductions, family status, and changes in family members. The HA will ensure that proper authorization from the family is always obtained before making verification inquiries.

A. RELEASE OF INFORMATION

The family will be required to sign specific authorization forms when information is needed that is not covered by the HUD form 9886, Authorization for Release of Information.

A copy of the release of information will be provided to a family member upon request.

Family refusal to cooperate with the HUD prescribed verification system will result in denial of admission or termination of assistance because it is a family obligation to supply any information requested by the HA or HUD.

B. METHODS OF VERIFICATION

The PHA will verify information through the five methods of verification acceptable to HUD in the following order:

1. Enterprise income verification (EIV)
2. Third-Party written verification
3. Third-party oral verification
4. Review of participant-supplied original documents
5. Certification/self-declaration

Enterprise Income Verification (EIV)

The HA will utilize Enterprise Income Verification tools according to PHA Security Policy and Procedures and the Work Number whenever possible.

Use of Third-Party Verification to Supplement EIV

EIV enhances, to the maximum extent possible, the third-party verification process of contacting individual employers identified by families or reviewing outdated income verification documents. EIV should not be considered an automatic substitute for other third-party verification. Rather, it may supplement other verification documentation, such as tenant-provided current, original documents. EIV documents will not be printed unless the caseworker is researching possible fraud. At the conclusion of the investigation, all EIV documents will be destroyed according to established PHA Security Policy and Procedures.

Third-Party Written Verification

Third-party written verification is used to verify information directly with the source. The family will be required to sign an authorization allowing the information source to release the specified information. Verifications received electronically directly from the source are considered third-party written verifications.

Third-party verification forms, including computerized printouts, will not be hand-carried by the family under any circumstances. The HA will send requests for third-party written verifications to the source at all times regardless of whether the family provides a computerized printout.

If third-party written verification is not used, the HA will document the reasons in the file.

For applicants, verifications may not be more than 60 days old at the time of voucher issuance. For participants, they are valid for 120 days from date of receipt.

Third-Party Oral Verification

Oral third-party verification will be used when written third-party verification is delayed or impossible. When third-party oral verification is used, staff will be required to document to whom they spoke, the date of the conversation, and the facts provided. If oral third-party verification is provided by telephone, the HA must originate the call. If third-party verification is not available, the HA will compare the specified information to any documents provided by the family.

Review of Documents

In the event that third-party written or oral verification or EIV is unavailable, or when information has not been verified by a third party, the HA will annotate the file accordingly and utilize original documents provided by the family as long as the documents contain complete information.

All such documents will be photocopied and retained in the family file. When documents cannot be photocopied, staff viewing the documents will annotate the file accordingly.

The HA will accept the following original (no photocopies accepted) documents from families: printed wage stubs, computer printouts from employers, signed letters and other documents as approved by the HA.

If third-party verification is received after documents have been accepted as provisional verification and there is a discrepancy, the HA will contact the third-party source and the family to resolve differences.

The HA will allow up to ten days for families to provide documents when third-party verification is impossible to obtain.

Self-Certification/Self-Declaration

When information cannot be verified by a third party or by review of documents, families will be required to submit a self-certification.

The HA will allow up to ten days for a family to provide a self-certification or self-declaration if other forms of verification are impossible to obtain.

C. COMPUTER MATCHING

In addition to EIV, the HA utilizes computer matching with the Department of Social Services (DPSS), the INS SAVE system. Other computer matching agreements with federal, state, and local government agencies will be utilized if available and cost-effective.

D. ITEMS TO BE VERIFIED

All eligibility factors will be verified, such as waiting list preference, income, deductions and exclusions, combined assets exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1000.00), and household composition.

E. VERIFYING NON-FINANCIAL FACTORS

Verification of Legal Identity

In order to prevent program abuse, the HA will require applicants to furnish verification of legal identity for all family members.

Family Relationships

The HA will require familial relationship verification as appropriate and necessary.

Verification of Permanent Absence of Adult Member

If an adult member who was formerly a member of the household is reported permanently absent by the family, the HA will require verification of the new address.

Verification of Change in Family Composition

The HA may verify changes in family composition (either reported or unreported). Third party verification procedures will be used.

Verification of Disability

Third party verification procedures will be used to document permanent disability status.

Verification of Citizenship/Eligible Immigrant Status

To be eligible for assistance, individuals must be U.S. citizens or eligible immigrants. Individuals who are neither may elect not to contend their status. Eligible immigrants must fall into one of the categories specified by the regulations and must have their status verified by Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Each family member must declare his or her status. Assistance cannot be delayed, denied, or terminated while verification of status is pending except that assistance to applicants may be delayed while the HA hearing is pending.

If an applicant or participant family member fails to sign required declarations and consent forms or provide documents, as required, they must be listed as an ineligible member. If any family member fails to provide and sign as required, the family may be denied or terminated from assistance.

If the HA determines that a family member has knowingly permitted an individual who is not eligible for assistance to reside in the family's unit, the family's assistance will be terminated, unless the ineligible individual has already been considered in prorating the family's assistance.

Verification of Social Security Numbers

Social security numbers must be provided as a condition of eligibility for all family members age six and over if they have been issued a number.

Verification of Reasonable Accommodation

Reasonable Accommodation requests for families will be considered when a family includes a person with disabilities. The person with a disability, or guardian or responsible party of the person with a disability, must submit a written Reasonable Accommodation request. In cases where a separate bedroom or live-in aide is requested because of reasonable accommodation, the Housing Authority will verify the need through third party verification from the patient's designated medical professional.

Verification of Request for Exception to the Zero Tolerance Policy

Victims of domestic violence, date violence, sexual assault, or stalking requesting an exception to the Zero Tolerance Policy will be required to complete HUD Form 50066 "Certification of Domestic Violence, Date Violence, Stalking" and return it to the HA within 14 days of request.

Chapter 8

VOUCHER ISSUANCE AND BRIEFINGS

INTRODUCTION

The HA's objectives are to provide families selected to participate with the tools to help them be successful in obtaining an acceptable housing unit, and to give them sufficient knowledge to derive maximum benefit from the program and to comply with program requirements. When families have been determined to be eligible, the HA will conduct a mandatory briefing to ensure that families understand how the program works. The briefing will provide a broad description of owner and family responsibilities, HA procedures, and how to lease a unit. The family will also receive a briefing packet that provides more detailed information about the program. This chapter describes how briefings will be conducted, the information that will be provided to families, and the policies for how changes in the family composition will be handled.

A. ISSUANCE OF VOUCHERS

When funding is available, the HA will issue Vouchers to applicants who have been determined eligible. The issuance of Vouchers must be within the dollar limitations set by the Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) budget.

B. BRIEFING TYPES AND REQUIRED ATTENDANCE (CFR 982.301)

Initial Applicant Briefing

A full HUD-required briefing will be conducted for applicant families who are determined to be eligible for assistance.

Briefing Packet

The documents and information provided in the briefing packets for the Voucher programs will comply with all HUD requirements.

The briefing packet includes owner identification documents containing private information, that once submitted to the HA, will not be considered part of the participant file.

The HA may conduct other types of briefings such as relocation and portability briefings for families, and owner briefings.

Other Information to be Provided at the Briefing

Family and owner responsibilities are explained to the new applicant. In addition to literature and our WEB site, applicants and owners may request specific clarification about program issues from the assigned Housing Specialist or Supervisor.

Guidance and materials are offered to assist the family in selecting a unit. Issues to be considered include: Proximity to employment, public transportation, schools, shopping and the accessibility of services. Applicants are encouraged to evaluate the prospective unit, such as the condition, whether the rent is reasonable, average utility expense, energy efficiency and security.

The family will have access to a list of landlords willing to lease to assisted families and non-profit organizations willing to assist in the housing search. In providing this courtesy list, the HA does not endorse any particular unit or landlord. There is no guarantee that the rents listed are reasonable or approvable, nor any guarantee that the units will pass Housing Quality Standards.

The HA will provide information on the advantages to moving to areas of low poverty. The family will be encouraged to choose a unit carefully and after due consideration.

The family will receive information about the Family Self-Sufficiency program and its advantages.

Families with three or more minors and families with disabled family members will receive additional assistance in locating units suitable for their housing needs.

Owners and participants will be instructed that side payments or any payment not approved by the HA will not be allowed. Acceptance of side payments or additional rent will be grounds for termination from program.

C. ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION IN LOW POVERTY AREAS

During its tenant briefings the Housing Authority encourages families to move to low poverty areas by explaining the advantages of moving to an area that may offer high-quality housing, education and employment opportunities. To increase the available housing stock to its clients, and to facilitate the opportunity for owners and tenants to gather for the purpose of leasing a unit, the HA convenes monthly Rental Fairs at its main office. This gives current participants who are in the relocation process, as well as families newly released from the waiting list, the opportunity to become acquainted with property owners with available units. In addition, landlords are invited to list their available property in the HA's Rental Listing which is made available to all voucher holders. Finally, the HA offers Landlord Workshops in order to expand its network of property owners and/or managers. The purpose of these workshops is to make special efforts to provide outreach and education to landlords who may not be familiar with the Section 8 program.

D. ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES WHO CLAIM DISCRIMINATION

The HA provides the family with the HUD Discrimination Complaint form and offers to assist in the completion of the form as well as directing the family to report suspected discrimination to the Fair Housing Council.

E. ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES WITH DISABILITIES.

The HA assists families with disabilities in locating accessible units by:

1. Maintaining a rental listing (which includes handicapped accessible units) of owners willing to rent to Section 8 participants, and
2. Providing a Housing Registry developed by the Community Access Center, and
3. Providing a listing of service agencies to help the disabled, and
4. Providing reasonable accommodation by extending the term of the voucher.

F. SECURITY DEPOSIT REQUIREMENTS

Security deposits charged by owners may not exceed those charged to unassisted tenants or the maximum prescribed by state or local law.

G. TERM OF VOUCHER (CFR 982.303)

During the briefing session, each household will be issued a Housing Choice Voucher which represents an agreement between the HA and the family specifying the rights and responsibilities of each party. It does not constitute admission to the program, which occurs when the lease and contract become effective.

Expirations

For participants who are relocating, Vouchers are valid for a period of 120 calendar days from the last date that assistance was paid. For those families that have an initial Voucher, the term of the Voucher is 60 calendar days.

If the family needs and requests an extension of the Voucher term as a reasonable accommodation to make the program accessible to and usable by a family member with disabilities, the HA must extend the Voucher term up to the term reasonably required for that purpose. An extension of up to 60 days may be granted. An extension of the term is granted by HA notice to the family.

If the family requests an extension for the Voucher due to other good cause such as illness of a household member, death of a family member, natural disaster or other unforeseeable circumstances, the request will be reviewed along with the documentation provided by the family regarding the circumstances requiring the extension. An extension of the term is granted by HA notice to the family.

The family will not be entitled to a review or a hearing if the Voucher has expired. If the family is currently assisted, they may remain as a Section 8 participant in their unit if there is an assisted contract in effect.

Suspensions

Suspensions are allowed for reasonable accommodation of persons with disabilities. The HA may grant a suspension for any part of the period after the family has submitted a Request for Tenancy Approval up to the time when the HA approves or denies the request.

H. VOUCHER ISSUANCE DETERMINATION FOR SPLIT HOUSEHOLDS

In those instances when a family assisted under the Section 8 program becomes divided into two otherwise eligible families, and the families cannot agree as to which family unit is to receive the assistance, and there is no determination by a court, the HA shall consider the following factors to determine which family member will continue to be assisted:

1. Which family member has custody of dependent children.
2. Which family member was the head of household when the Voucher was initially issued (listed on the initial application).
3. Which family contains elderly or disabled members.

4. Whether domestic violence was involved in the breakup. (*VAWA protects the victim, if a woman, from losing their HUD assisted housing*).
5. Which family members will remain in the unit.
6. Recommendations of social service professionals.

Documentation of these factors will be the responsibility of the requesting parties. If documentation is not provided, the HA will terminate assistance on the basis of failure to provide necessary information.

I. REMAINING MEMBER OF TENANT FAMILY-RETENTION OF VOUCHER

To be considered the remaining member of the tenant family, the person must have been previously approved as part of the nucleus family by the HA and be currently living in the unit.

A live-in aide, by definition, is not a member of the family and will not be considered a remaining member of the family.

In order for a minor child to continue to receive assistance as a remaining member:

1. The court has to have awarded emancipated minor status to the minor, or
2. The HA has to have verified that the Department of Social Services and/or the Juvenile Court has arranged for another adult to be brought into the assisted unit to care for the child/children for an indefinite period.

A reduction in family size may require a reduction in the Voucher bedroom authorization.

Retention of a voucher by the remaining member currently living in the unit will only be approved as a result of the death of the Head of Household, or removal of the Head of Household to an assisted living environment, or government facility. To be considered the remaining member of the tenant family, the person must have been previously approved as part of the nucleus family by the HA. In such a situation the remaining family member will retain the voucher. A Co-head that was not part of the nucleus family would not be eligible to retain the voucher.

Chapter 9

REQUEST FOR TENANCY APPROVAL (RTA) AND CONTRACT EXECUTION

INTRODUCTION

After a family is issued a Voucher, they may search for a unit anywhere within the jurisdiction of the HA, or outside of the HA's jurisdiction if they qualify for portability. The family must find an eligible unit under the program rules, with an owner/landlord who is willing to enter into a Housing Assistance Payments Contract with the HA. This chapter defines the types of eligible housing, the HA's policies which pertain to initial inspections, lease requirements, owner disapproval, and the processing of RTA's.

A. REQUEST FOR TENANCY APPROVAL (RTA) (CFR 982.302)

The RTA and a copy of the proposed lease must be submitted by the family prior to the expiration of the Voucher.

Both the owner and Voucher holder must sign the RTA. The HA will not permit the family to submit more than one RTA at a time.

HUD regulations prohibit the HA from approving a unit if the owner is the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister, brother of any member of the tenant family, unless the HA determines that approving the unit would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities. (CFR 982.306 (d))

Review of the RTA (CFR 982.508)

HA staff will review the rent amount to ensure the rent is reasonable and that it is affordable as determined by HUD regulations for the family. Affordable for the family means that the family's share of the rent plus the current utility allowance cannot exceed 40 percent of the household's adjusted monthly income. If the unit does not meet the affordability criteria, the HA will attempt to negotiate the rent with the owner. If the owner does not agree on the contract rent after the HA has tried and failed to negotiate a revised rent, the HA will inform the family and owner that the RTA is disapproved.

Owners must submit their own lease with the HUD lease addendum attached and a property management agreement (if applicable). The HA may review the lease to ensure compliance with HUD regulations, state and local laws. Responsibility for utilities, appliances and optional services must correspond to those provided on the RTA.

If the HA determines that the RTA cannot be approved for any reason, the landlord and the family will be notified in writing.

If the HA determines that the RTA is approvable, staff will schedule the unit for initial inspection within seven (7) working days of receipt of the RTA, if the unit is currently ready for inspection, or at the earliest possible time when the unit is not currently ready for inspection. Any variance from this time frame will be documented in the family's file.

Residence Limitations

Interest in Unit: The owner may not reside in the assisted unit. The owner may reside in a unit in which a voucher family is participating in a “shared housing” type of assistance. However, the owner may not be a resident owner if the Section 8 voucher participant is related to the owner.

Relative Owner: The HA must not approve a unit if the owner is the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister, brother, uncle, aunt or in-law of any member of the family, unless the HA determines that approving the unit would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities.

D. INFORMATION TO OWNERS

The HA is required to provide prospective owners with the address of the applicant and the names and addresses of the current and previous landlords if known. The HA will make an exception to this requirement if the family’s whereabouts must be protected due to domestic abuse or witness protection.

The HA will inform owners that it is the responsibility of the landlord to determine the suitability of prospective tenants. They will be encouraged to screen applicants for rent payment history, eviction history, damage to units, and other factors related to the family’s suitability as a tenant.

E. OWNER DISAPPROVAL

For purposes of this section, “owner” includes a principal or other interested party. The HA will disapprove the owner for the reasons stated in Chapter 16 of this Plan.

F. CONTRACT EXECUTION PROCESS

The HA prepares the Housing Assistance Payment Contract for execution. The family and the owner will execute the lease agreement, and the owner and the HA will execute the HAP Contract with the owner. Copies of the documents will be furnished to the parties who signed the respective documents.

G. CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP

The HA requires written documentation of any change in ownership. Copies of the recorded grant deed and/or escrow closing statement are examples of acceptable documentation. In addition, the new owner must sign an agreement to abide by the terms of the original HA Contract with previous owner.

Chapter 10

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS AND INSPECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

(CFR 982.404)

Housing Quality Standards (HQS) are the HUD minimum quality standards for tenant-based programs. HQS inspections are required both at initial occupancy and annually during the term of the lease. HQS inspections apply to the building and premises, as well as the unit.

These minimum standards may be enhanced by the HA, provided that by doing so the HA does not overly restrict the number of units available for lease under the program. The use of the term “HQS” in this Administrative Plan refers to the combination of both HUD and HA requirements. This chapter describes the HA’s procedures for performing HQS and other types of inspections, and standards for the timeliness of repairs. It also explains the responsibilities of the owner and family, and the consequences of non-compliance with HQS requirements for both families and owners.

A. TYPES OF INSPECTIONS

Efforts will be made at all times to encourage owners to provide housing above HQS minimum standards. All utilities and appliances must be in service before the unit will pass HQS.

There are five types of inspections the HA will perform:

1. Initial/Move-in: Conducted within seven (7) working days of receipt of Request for Tenancy Approval or as soon as possible from the date the unit will be ready for inspection.
2. Annual: Must be conducted within 12 months of the last inspection date.
3. Special/Complaint: At the request of an owner, family, agency or third-party.
4. Move-Out/Vacate: At the landlord’s request, if damage is a result of the tenant not meeting their obligations and such damage would cause tenant to lose their assistance.
5. Quality Control: Quality control inspections are conducted in an amount necessary to meet HUD requirements.

B. ACCEPTABILITY CRITERIA AND EXCEPTIONS TO HQS

The HA adheres to the acceptability criteria in the program regulations and HUD Inspection Manual.

Additions to HQS:

- Modifications or adaptations to a unit must meet applicable HQS and building codes.
- All emergency systems must be operable (i.e., pull cords for elderly/disabled complexes).
- Security bars/window bars must have a quick release mechanism.
- Earthquake straps are required for all hot water heaters.
- A functional cooling system must be in all units located east of, and including Palm Springs.
- One good screen is required on one window in each room.
- All exterior doors must have working deadbolts (inside cannot be keyed – must be keyless).

C. INSPECTIONS

(CFR 982.405 (a))

The HA conducts an inspection in accordance with Housing Quality Standards at least annually, but no sooner than 120 days prior to the anniversary month of the contract. Special or Quality Control inspections may be scheduled between anniversary dates.

The landlord must correct HQS deficiencies that cause a unit to fail unless the fail item is one for which the tenant is responsible. HAP payments will not be made on units that do not meet HQS. The family is responsible for breaches of HQS that are caused by any of the following:

- The family fails to pay for any utilities that the owner is not required to pay for, but which are to be paid for by the tenant;
- The family fails to provide and maintain any appliances that the owner is not required to provide, but which are to be provided by the tenant; or
- Any member of the household or guest damages the dwelling unit or premises (damage beyond ordinary wear and tear).
- The family fails to allow the HA to inspect the unit at reasonable times with reasonable notice.
- If the family does not contact the HA to reschedule the inspection (with good cause), or if the family misses one inspection appointment, the HA will consider the family to have violated a family obligation, and their assistance may be terminated in accordance with the termination procedure in this Plan.

Time Standards for Repairs

1. Emergency items that endanger the family’s health or safety must be corrected within 24 hours of notification.
2. For non-emergency items, all repairs must be completed as specified by the HA, not to exceed 30 days.
3. For major repairs, the Housing Specialist may approve an extension beyond 30 days.

In accordance with the Notice to Repair, the contract will be terminated if the unit is not in compliance with HQS. If the tenant is the responsible party, a Pre-termination of Assistance Appointment letter will be sent. No payments will be made to the owner after the contract has been terminated.

D. EMERGENCY REPAIR ITEMS

(CFR 982.404 (a) (3) (b) (2)

The following items are considered of an emergency nature and must be corrected by the owner or tenant (whoever is responsible) within 24 hours of notice by the Housing Specialist.

- Lack of security for the unit
- Waterlogged ceiling in imminent danger of falling
- Major plumbing leaks or flooding
- Natural gas leak or fumes
- Electrical problem which could result in shock or fire

- Utilities not in service
- No running hot water
- Broken glass where someone could be injured
- Obstacle which prevents tenant's entrance or exit
- Lack of at least one functioning toilet
- Any other item deemed an immediate health or safety hazard

In those cases where there is leaking gas or a potential of fire or other threat to public safety, and the responsible party cannot be contacted, the proper authorities will be notified by the HA.

E. INITIAL HQS INSPECTION

An Initial Inspection will be conducted to:

- Determine if the unit and property meet the HQS as defined by HUD regulations and this Plan.
- Determine if the Rent to Owner is reasonable and document the information to be used in that determination.

F. SPECIAL/COMPLAINT INSPECTIONS

If at any time a family, owner, agency, or third party notifies the HA that the unit does not meet Housing Quality Standards, the HA will conduct an inspection.

F. QUALITY CONTROL INSPECTIONS

(CFR982.405(b))

The Housing Supervisor or designee will perform Quality Control inspections, in an amount necessary to meet HUD requirements. The purpose of Quality Control inspections is to ascertain that Housing Specialists/Program Assistants are conducting accurate and complete inspections, and to ensure that there is consistency among inspectors in the application of HQS.

Chapter 11

OWNER RENTS, RENT REASONABLENESS, AND PAYMENT STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

The HA is responsible to ensure that the rents charged by owners are reasonable based upon objective comparables in the rental market. When the HA has determined that the unit meets the minimum HQS, that the lease is approvable, and that the rent is reasonable, it will enter into a Housing Assistance Payment Contract with the owner. This chapter explains the HA's procedures for determination of rent-reasonableness, payments to owners, adjustments to the payment standards, and rent adjustments.

A. OWNER PAYMENT IN THE VOUCHER PROGRAM

The Housing Choice Voucher formula for determining maximum subsidy is the lower of the Payment Standard or the Gross rent (contract rent plus current utility allowance) for the unit minus the family's Total Tenant Payment.

- The maximum subsidy for each family is determined by the payment standard for the Voucher size issued to the family (or the gross rent as stated above), less 30 percent of the family's monthly adjusted income. The actual subsidy level could be less if the family is required to pay the minimum total tenant payment (10 percent of the family's monthly income).
- The Voucher size issued to the family is based on the HA's subsidy standards. The payment standard for the family is based on the lesser of the payment standard for the Voucher size issued or the payment standard for the number of bedrooms of the selected unit.
- The housing assistance payment to the owner is the lesser of the subsidy described above or the rent charged by the owner.

B. LATE PAYMENTS TO OWNERS

The HA must pay the housing assistance payment promptly when due to the owner in accordance with the HAP contract. Late payments to owners shall be the lesser of 1) the late payment as stated in the lease between the owner and the tenant, or 2) \$50.00. However, the HA shall not be obligated to pay any late payment penalty if HUD determines that late payment by the HA is due to factors beyond the HA's control. The HA has determined that the HAP payment by the HA is deemed received by the owner upon mailing by the HA. Direct deposit is available to landlords to assist in the prompt receipt of HAP payments.

The HA may only use the following sources to pay a late payment penalty from program receipts under the consolidated ACC: administrative fee income for the program or the administrative fee reserve for the program. The HA may not use other program receipts for this purpose.

C. MAKING PAYMENTS TO OWNERS

Once ownership is verified and the HAP Contract is executed, the HA begins processing monthly payments to the landlord. The Housing Assistance Payment checks to owners will be processed by

the Housing Authority Accounting Department.

D. EXCEPTION PAYMENT STANDARD

The HUD field office may approve an exception payment standard up to 120% of the FMR for all units of a given size leased by families in an exception area.

An area exception payment standard may not exceed 120% of the FMR. An area exception payment standard will not be approved unless HUD determines that an exception rent is needed either:

6. To help families find housing outside areas of high poverty; or
7. Because Voucher holders have trouble finding housing for lease under the program within the term of the Voucher

The HA may approve an exception payment standard up to 110% of the FMR when it has determined that it is needed as a reasonable accommodation to make the program accessible to and usable by the family member with a disability.

E. RENT REASONABLENESS DETERMINATIONS (CFR 982.507)

Rent reasonableness determinations are made when units are placed under HAP Contract for the first time, before any increase in rent to the owner, if there is a 5% decrease in the published FMR, and if directed by HUD.

The HA determines rent reasonableness by maintaining a database of assisted and unassisted rental units in all bedroom sizes throughout the county. Staff is required to add units to this database monthly, and the list is purged quarterly. Newspapers, rental magazines, calls to property owners and managers and the Internet are some of the sources used to maintain the database.

The HA will consider the location, quality, size, unit type, age of the unit, amenities, services, maintenance and utilities provided by the owner in determining rent reasonableness.

A printout showing the rental amount of comparable units in the area is put into the family's file, signed and dated by the Housing Specialist, documenting the data used to determine rent reasonableness.

F. PAYMENT STANDARDS AND ADJUSTMENTS (CFR 982.503)

The subsidy amount is based on a payment standard set by the HA. The HA will review the Payment Standard annually to determine whether an adjustment should be made for some or all unit sizes. The Payment Standard will be reviewed according to HUD's requirements and this Plan, and if an increase is warranted, the Payment Standard will be adjusted within 90 percent to 110 percent of the current HUD-published Fair Market Rent.

The HA may approve an exception payment standard up to 110% of the FMR when it has determined that it is needed as a reasonable accommodation to make the program accessible to and usable by the family member with a disability. The HA may apply to HUD Headquarters to

approve a payment standard up to 120% of the FMR if it determines that the increase is needed as a reasonable accommodation so that the program is readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities in accordance with 24 CFR part 8.

The HA may use some or all of the measures below in making a determination whether an adjustment should be made to the Payment Standards.

- **Lowering of the Payment Standard**

Statistical analysis may reveal the Payment Standard should be lowered, in which case the Payment Standard should not be less than 90 percent of the current FMR. If the FMR is lowered, the Payment Standard will be decreased in accordance with HUD regulations.

- **Financial Feasibility**

Before increasing the Payment Standard, the HA may review the budget and the project reserve to determine the impact projected subsidy increases would have on available funding for the program and number of families served.

For this purpose, the HA will compare the number of families who could be served under higher Payment Standards with the number assisted under current Payment Standards.

G. RENT INCREASES

Owners may not request rent increases to be effective prior to the expiration of the initial term of the lease. An owner request for a rent increase must be in accordance with the lease, state law, the contract and HUD regulations. The requested rent increase must be reasonable for market conditions. If the HA disapproves the owner's request for a rent increase because the rent is not reasonable, the HA may issue the family a Voucher to enable them to relocate.

Chapter 12

REEXAMINATIONS

INTRODUCTION

HUD requires the HA to re-certify the income and household composition of all families at least annually. In addition, the HA is required to inspect the assisted unit at least annually, and to process requests for rent adjustments. These activities must be coordinated to ensure that they are completed in accordance with the regulations. It is a HUD requirement that families report all changes in household composition and income at the annual reexamination. The HA decides what other changes must be reported, and the procedures for reporting all income. This chapter defines the HA's policy for conducting annual reexaminations and coordinating the annual activities. It also explains the interim reporting requirements for families, and the standards for timely reporting.

A. ANNUAL RECERTIFICATION/REEXAMINATION

Requirement to Attend

All household members may be required to attend scheduled interviews. The HA will randomly select approximately 10% of reexaminations to be completed by appointment. Failure to appear for a scheduled interview is cause to terminate assistance for failure to comply with the family obligation of providing information to the HA.

Documents Required from the Family

Failure to provide documents required by the HA is a violation of a family obligation and grounds for termination of assistance. The family will be given 10 calendar days to provide requested information and/or documents.

The HA may make exceptions to these policies if the family is able to document an emergency situation that prevented them from attending a scheduled appointment or providing requested information.

Tenant Rent Increases

If the tenant rent increases, a notice of at least 30 days is mailed to the family prior to the effective date of the change whenever possible. If the owner has served the tenant with a Rent Increase Notice, that notice shall serve as the notice to the tenant of the increase in their rent.

If there has been a misrepresentation or a material omission by the family, the family may be terminated and/or required to repay any overpaid HAP to the HA.

Tenant Rent Decreases

If tenant rent decreases, it will be effective on the first day of the month after the written notification of the change. If the family causes a delay in the processing of the reexamination, the rent change will be effective on the first day of the month following completion of the reexamination.

B. REPORTING INTERIM CHANGES

The HA requires program participants to report all changes in household composition or income in writing within 10 days of the change to the HA. This includes additions due to birth, adoption and court-awarded custody. The family must obtain HA approval prior to all other additions to the household.

The U.S. citizenship/eligible immigrant status of additional family members must be declared and verified as required at the first interim or regular reexamination after moving into the unit.

Interim Reexamination Policy

Participants must report all changes in income, assets, and family household composition in writing within 10 days of change. Changes will be processed if they are anticipated to continue for sixty (60) or more days.

Decreases in Income

The HA will process the change if the decrease in income is \$50 monthly or more and anticipated to continue.

Increases in Income

The HA will conduct interim reexaminations for participants who have an increase in income of more than \$100 monthly and anticipated to continue.

HA Errors

When the HA finds that we have made an error, an interim reexamination will be conducted to correct the error. A minimum of thirty (30) days notice will be given to Tenant and Owner if the correction changes the HAP payment.

Changes in family size/subsidy standards

A larger bedroom size will not be issued if a member of the nucleus family moves out and returns as an adult. In these cases, the HA will not approve the addition of household members that would result in overcrowding according to HQS maximum occupancy standards.

For additions to the family in the following cases, the HA will issue the family a relocation Voucher when the change causes overcrowding according to HQS maximum occupancy standards:

- Additions by marriage
- Addition of a minor who is a member of the nucleus family who had been living elsewhere
- Addition of a HA-approved live-in aide
- Addition due to birth, adoption or court-awarded custody
- Addition of long term placement foster care children or adults

Family Member moves out

Families are required to notify the HA in writing within 10 days if any family member leaves the assisted household. When the family notifies the HA, they must furnish the following information:

- The date the family member moved out
- The new address, if known, of the family member
- A statement as to whether the family member is temporarily or permanently absent

C. TIMELY REPORTING OF CHANGES IN INCOME AND ASSETS

Families who do not report required changes within time frames established by the HA are considered in violation of a family obligation, and are subject to termination of assistance.

D. NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS OF REEXAMINATIONS

The HUD form 50058 will be completed and transmitted as required by HUD.

Chapter 13

MOVES WITH CONTINUED ASSISTANCE/PORTABILITY

INTRODUCTION

HUD regulations permit families to move with continued assistance to another unit within the HA's jurisdiction, or to a unit outside of the HA's jurisdiction under portability procedures. The regulations also allow the HA the discretion to develop policies which define any limitations on moves. This chapter defines the procedures for moves, both within and outside of the HA's jurisdiction, and the policies and limitations on moves.

A. ALLOWABLE MOVES

A family may move to a new unit if:

1. The assisted lease for the old unit has terminated because the HA has terminated the HAP contract for owner breach.
2. The HA has terminated the HAP contract because the family is no longer eligible for the current number of bedrooms.
3. To determine whether the family is eligible for continued assistance, a full reexamination will be done prior to approval of any relocation, unless the Eligibility Questionnaire and verifications in the file are dated within the last 60 days.
4. The owner has given the family a notice to vacate and the family is eligible for continued assistance.
5. The family has given proper notice of lease termination and is eligible for continued assistance.
6. The family has an income change that will result in a Zero HAP at the new assisted unit. In these cases, the contract with the owner will be for a six-month period only.
7. A mutual agreement has been signed by both the Owner and Tenant.

B. RESTRICTIONS ON MOVES

Families will not be permitted to move during the initial term of the lease. Families will not be permitted to move more than once in a 12-month period unless a 6 month lease is in place according 24 CFR 982.309 (a). The HA will deny permission to move if:

- The family owes the HA money
- The family has violated a Family Obligation
- The family is in violation of their lease

The HA may make exceptions to these restrictions if there is an emergency or safety reason for the move or as a reasonable accommodation for a disabled family member.

C. PORTABILITY

Portability applies to families moving out of or into the HA's jurisdiction within the United States and its territories. Under portability, families are eligible to receive assistance to lease a unit outside of the initial HA's jurisdiction.

D. OUTGOING PORTABILITY

When a family requests to move outside of the HA's jurisdiction, the request must specify the area to which the family wants to move. Portability outside of HACR's jurisdiction will be approved if

the family is eligible for continued assistance.

The Violence Against Women Act of 2005 provides that the family may receive a voucher and move in violation of the lease under the portability procedures if the family has complied with all other obligations of the voucher program and has moved out of the assisted dwelling unit in order to protect the health or safety of an individual who is or has been the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking and who reasonably believed he or she was imminently threatened by harm from further violence if he or she remained in the assisted dwelling unit.

Restrictions on Portability

Families will not be permitted to exercise portability during the initial 12 month period after admission to the program, except as reasonable accommodation for a disabled family member, or under extenuating circumstances subject to verification and approval by the HA.

E. INCOMING PORTABILITY

Absorption or Administration

The HA will accept a family with a valid Voucher from another jurisdiction and either administer or absorb the Voucher. When administering assistance for the family, a Portability Voucher will be issued with the same start date as the initial HA. The HA may grant extensions in accordance with this Administrative Plan and Federal Regulations.

The HA will issue a subsidy based on the family composition listed in the initial PHA's 50058. Any changes must be approved by the initial PHA. The subsidy issued will be based on the HA's current subsidy standards.

Chapter 14

CONTRACT TERMINATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract is the contract between the owner and the HA which defines the responsibilities of both parties. This chapter describes the circumstances under which the contract can be terminated by the HA and the owner, and the policies and procedures for such terminations.

A. CONTRACT TERMINATION

The term of the HAP Contract is the same as the term of the lease. The Contract between the owner and the HA may be terminated by the HA, or by the owner terminating the lease.

No future subsidy payments on behalf of the family will be made by the HA to the owner after the month in which the Contract is terminated. The owner must reimburse the HA for any subsidies paid by the HA for any period after the contract termination date.

If the family continues to occupy the unit after the Section 8 contract is terminated, the family is responsible for the total amount of rent due to the owner.

After a contract termination, if the family meets the criteria for a move with continued assistance, the family may lease-up in another unit. The contract for the new unit may begin during the month in which the family moved from the old unit.

B. TERMINATION OF LEASE BY OWNER

Upon proper notice, the lease may provide for termination without cause after the initial term of the lease.

The owner must provide the tenant a written notice specifying the grounds for termination of tenancy. If the tenant does not vacate based on the owner's notice, the owner must follow state/local laws to evict the tenant.

The HA will continue to make housing assistance payments until the participant vacates the unit or the eviction is concluded, whichever occurs first. In no instance will a housing assistance payment be made for any period beyond the contract termination date, or for the month following the month the tenant vacates the unit.

Federal Regulations *24CFR 982.552 (c) Authority to deny admission or terminate assistance (1) Grounds for denial or termination of assistance states*, "The PHA may at any time deny program assistance for an applicant or termination program assistance for a participant, for any of the following grounds: (ii) If any member of the family has been evicted from federally assisted housing in the last five years".

C. TERMINATION OF THE CONTRACT BY HA

The term of the HAP contract terminates when the lease terminates, when the family vacates the unit, or when the owner has breached the HAP contract.

The HA may also terminate the contract if:

- The HA terminates assistance to the family
- The family is required to move from a unit which is under-occupied or is overcrowded
- Funding is no longer available under the ACC
- The participant has requested their assistance be terminated

The contract will terminate automatically if 180 days have passed since the last housing assistance payment to the owner.

D. TERMINATIONS DUE TO INELIGIBLE IMMIGRATION STATUS

The HA will follow HUD rules for terminations due to ineligible immigration status.

Chapter 15

DENIAL OR TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE

INTRODUCTION

The HA may deny assistance for an applicant or terminate assistance for a participant because of the family's action or failure to act. The HA will provide families with a written description of the family obligations under the program, the grounds under which the HA can deny or terminate assistance, and the HA's informal hearing procedures. This chapter describes when the HA is required to deny or terminate assistance, and the HA's policies for the denial of assistance and the grounds for termination of assistance under an outstanding HAP contract.

A. GROUNDS FOR DENIAL OF ASSISTANCE

Form of Denial of Assistance

Denial of assistance for an applicant may include any or all of the following:

1. Denial for placement on the HA waiting list
2. Denying or withdrawing a Voucher
3. Refusing to enter into a HAP contract or approve a lease
4. Refusing to process or provide assistance under portability procedures

Mandatory Denial of Assistance

The HA must deny assistance to applicants for the following reasons:

1. If any member of the family fails to sign and submit HUD or HA required consent forms for obtaining information.
2. If any family member fails to meet the eligibility requirements concerning individuals enrolled at an institution of higher learning as specified in 24 CFR 5.612.
3. If the family is under contract and 180 days have elapsed since the HA's last housing assistance payment was made.
4. If an applicant or any household member has been evicted from federally assisted housing for drug-related criminal activity within three years unless the PHA determines:
 - a. That the evicted household member who engaged in the drug-related criminal activity has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program; or,
 - b. That the circumstances leading to the eviction no longer exist (for example, the criminal household member has died or is imprisoned).
5. If the HA determines that any household member is currently engaging in illegal use of a drug
6. If the HA determines that it has reasonable cause to believe that a household member's illegal drug use or a pattern of illegal drug use may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents
7. Any household member has ever been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.
8. If any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program. (In this screening of applicants, the HA must perform criminal history background checks necessary to determine whether any household member is subject to a lifetime sex offender registration requirement in the State where the housing is located and in other States where the household members are known to have resided.)

Permissive Grounds for Denial of Assistance

The HA may at any time deny program assistance for an applicant, or terminate program assistance for a participant, for any of the reasons listed below.

1. If the family violates any family obligation under the program.
2. If any member of the family has been evicted from federally assisted housing in the last five years.
3. If a PHA has ever terminated assistance under the program for any member of the family.
4. If any member of the family commits fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program
6. If the family currently owes rent or other amounts to the HA or to another PHA in connection with Section 8 or Public Housing Assistance under the 1937 Act
7. If the family has not reimbursed any PHA for amounts paid to an owner under a HAP contract for rent, damages to the unit, or other amounts owed by the family under the lease
8. If the family breaches an agreement with the HA to pay amounts owed to a PHA, or amounts paid to an owner by a PHA
9. If the family has engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior toward HA personnel “Abusive or violent behavior towards HA personnel” include verbal as well as physical abuse or violence. Use of expletives that are generally considered insulting, racial epithets, or other language, written or oral, that is customarily used to insult or intimidate, may be cause for termination or denial. “Threatening” refers to oral or written threats or physical gestures that communicate intent to abuse or commit violence. Actual physical abuse or violence will always be cause for termination.
10. If the family has been engaged in criminal activity or alcohol abuse as described in 982.553
11. If the HA determines that any household member is currently engaged in, or has engaged in during a reasonable time before the admission: i) Drug-related criminal activity; ii) Violent criminal activity; iii) other criminal activity which may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents or persons residing in the immediate vicinity; or iv) other criminal activity which may threaten the health or safety of the owner, property management staff, or persons performing a contract administration function or responsibility on behalf of the HA (including a HA employee or HA contractor, subcontractor, or agent). For purposes of this prohibition, a household member is “currently engaged in” criminal activity if that person has engaged in the behavior recently enough to justify a reasonable belief that the behavior is current.
12. If the HA determines that it has reasonable cause to believe that a household member’s abuse or pattern of abuse of alcohol may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents

B. GROUNDS FOR TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE

Form of Termination of Assistance

Termination of assistance for a participant may include any or all of the following:

1. Refusing to enter into a HAP contract or approve a lease.
2. Terminating housing assistance payments under an outstanding HAP contract.
3. Refusing to process or provide assistance under portability procedures.

Mandatory Termination of Assistance

The HA must terminate program assistance for the following reasons:

1. If a family is evicted from housing assisted under the program for serious violation of the lease.
2. If any member of the family fails to sign and submit HUD or HA required consent forms for obtaining information.
3. If any family member fails to meet the eligibility requirements concerning individuals enrolled at an institution of higher learning as specified in 24 CFR 5.612.
4. If the HA determines that any member of the household has ever been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.

Permissive Grounds for Termination of Assistance

The HA may at any time deny program assistance for an applicant, or terminate program assistance for a participant, for any of the reasons listed below.

1. If the family violates any family obligation under the program.
2. If any member of the family has been evicted from federally assisted housing in the last five years.
3. If a PHA has ever terminated assistance under the program for any member of the family.
4. If any member of the family commits fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program
6. If the family currently owes rent or other amounts to the HA or to another PHA in connection with Section 8 or Public Housing Assistance under the 1937 Act
7. If the family has not reimbursed any PHA for amounts paid to an owner under a HAP contract for rent, damages to the unit, or other amounts owed by the family under the lease
8. If the family breaches an agreement with the HA to pay amounts owed to a PHA, or amounts paid to an owner by a PHA
9. If the family has engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior toward HA personnel “Abusive or violent behavior towards HA personnel” include verbal as well as physical abuse or violence. Use of expletives that are generally considered insulting, racial epithets, or other language, written or oral, that is customarily used to insult or intimidate, may be cause for termination or denial. “Threatening” refers to oral or written threats or physical gestures that communicate intent to abuse or commit violence. Actual physical abuse or violence will always be cause for termination.
10. If any household member is currently engaged in any illegal use of a drug; or if a pattern of illegal use of a drug by any household member interferes with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.
11. If the HA determines that any family member has violated the family’s obligation under 24 CFR 982.551 not to engage in any drug-related criminal activity.
12. If an applicant or family violates the Amended Policy on Zero Tolerance Policy of Criminal Activity.

C. Violation Against Women Act (VAWA) of 2005

Denial of assistance to an applicant or termination of assistance of a participant for criminal activity are subject to the provisions of the Violence Against Women Act of 2005 as described below:

1. Being a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking (see glossary for legal definitions) is not a basis for denial of assistance or admission to public or assisted housing if the applicant otherwise qualifies for assistance or admission
2. Incidents or threats of abuse will not be construed as serious or repeated violations of the lease or other “good cause” for termination of the assistance, tenancy, or occupancy rights of a victim of abuse
3. Criminal activity directly relating to abuse, engaged in by a member of a tenant’s household or any guest or other person under the tenant’s control, shall not be cause for termination of assistance, tenancy, or occupancy rights if the tenant or an immediate member of the tenant’s family is the victim of that abuse
4. Notwithstanding the restrictions that VAWA places, the HA may “bifurcate” a lease without regard to whether a household member is a signatory to the lease, in order to evict, remove, terminate occupancy rights, or terminate assistance to any individual who is a tenant or lawful occupant and who engages in criminal acts of physical violence against family members or others, without evicting, removing, terminating assistance to, or otherwise penalizing the victim of such violence who is also a tenant or lawful occupant, and such eviction, removal, termination of occupancy rights, or termination of assistance shall be effected in accordance with the procedures prescribed by federal, state, and local law for the termination of leases or assistance under the relevant program of HUD-assisted housing. Neither the authority nor the procedures under any other law is necessary to bifurcate or otherwise remove an individual from the lease. Furthermore, this federal statutory authority to bifurcate a lease or otherwise remove an individual takes precedence over any federal, state, or local law to the contrary.
5. The HA has authority to terminate voucher assistance for certain family members while permitting other members of a participant family to continue receiving assistance (providing the culpable family member will no longer reside in the unit). The HA’s right to exercise this administrative discretion is not dependent on a bifurcated lease or other eviction action by the owner against an individual family member.
6. Certification of Abuse: The HA will request that the victim abuse complete the HUD form 50066 -- Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence or Stalking. This form must be provided within 14 business days from the date the HA requests it. Without the certification, the HA may terminate assistance.

Family Self Sufficiency (FSS)

The HA will not terminate assistance for FSS families who fail to comply with the FSS Contract of Participation unless participation in FSS is a requirement or condition of the program under which the family was admitted.

D. FAMILY OBLIGATIONS

1. The family must supply any information that the HA or HUD determines is necessary in the administration of the program, including submission of required evidence of citizenship or eligible immigration status (as provided by 24 CFR). “Information” includes any requested certification, release or other documentation.

2. The family must supply any information requested by the HA or HUD for use in a regularly scheduled reexamination or interim reexamination of family income and composition in accordance with HUD requirements.
3. The family must disclose and verify Social Security numbers and must sign and submit consent forms for obtaining information in accordance with HUD regulations.
4. Any information supplied by the family must be true and complete.
5. The family is responsible for an HQS breach caused by the family or their invitees.
6. The family must allow the HA to inspect the unit at reasonable times and after reasonable notice.
7. The family may not commit any serious or repeated violation of the lease.
8. The family must notify the HA and the owner before the family moves out of the unit or terminates the lease on notice to the owner.
9. The family must promptly give the HA a copy of any owner eviction notice.
10. The family must use the assisted unit for residence by the family. The unit must be the family's only residence.
11. The composition of the assisted family residing in the unit must be approved by the HA. The family must promptly inform the HA of the marriage (or the addition of a co-head), birth, adoption or court-awarded custody of a child. The family must request HA approval to add any family member as an occupant of the unit. No other person may reside in the unit (except for a foster child or live-in aide).
12. The family must promptly notify the HA if any family member no longer resides in the unit.
13. If the HA has given approval, a foster child or a live-in aide may reside in the unit. If the family does not request approval or HA approval is denied, the family may not allow a foster child or live-in aide to reside with the assisted family.
14. Members of the household may engage in legal profit-making activities in the unit, but only if such activities are incidental to primary use of the unit as a residence by members of the family.
15. The family must not sublease or let the unit.
16. The family must not assign the lease or transfer the unit.
17. The family must supply any information or certification requested by the HA to verify that the family is living in the unit, or relating to family absence from the unit, including any HA-requested information or certification on the purposes of family absences. The family must cooperate with the HA for this purpose. The family must promptly notify the HA of absence from the unit.
18. The family must not own or have any interest in the unit.
19. The members of the family must not commit fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with the programs.
20. The members of the family may not engage in alcohol or drug-related criminal activity or violent criminal activity or other criminal activity that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of other residents and persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises.
21. An assisted family, or members of the family, may not receive Section 8 tenant-based assistance while receiving another housing subsidy, for the same unit or for a different unit, under any duplicative (as determined by HUD or in accordance with HUD requirements) federal, state or local housing assistance program.

22. The members of the household must not abuse alcohol in a way that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the other residents and persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises.

Explanations and Terms

The term “promptly” when used with the family obligations always means “within 10 calendar days.”

Housing Authority Discretion

In deciding whether to deny or terminate assistance because of action or failure to act by members of the family, the HA may consider all relevant circumstances such as the seriousness of the case, the extent of participation or culpability of individual family members, mitigating circumstances related to the disability of a family member, the length of time since the violation occurred and more recent record of compliance, and the effects of denial or termination of assistance on other family members who were not involved in the action or failure to act. All denials or terminations of assistance will be consistent with fair housing and equal opportunity provisions.

The HA may impose, as a condition of continued assistance for other family members, a requirement that other family members who participated in or were culpable for the action or failure will not reside in the unit.

In determining whether to deny admission or terminate assistance for illegal use of drugs or alcohol abuse by a household member who is no longer engaged in such behavior, the HA may consider whether such household member is participating in or has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program, or has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully. For this purpose, the HA may require the applicant or participant to submit evidence of the household member’s current participation in, or successful completion of, a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program or evidence of otherwise having been rehabilitated successfully.

If the family includes a person with disabilities, the HA will determine if such action is subject to consideration of reasonable accommodation.

Lease Violations

In determining whether a serious or repeated violation of the lease will cause a termination of assistance, the HA will consider all circumstances including whether the owner terminates tenancy through court action for serious or repeated violation of the lease, the tenant’s statements and documents, verifications provided by either the owner or the tenant, and any reports of lease violations, neighborhood complaints or other third party information.

HQS Breach

The HA will determine if an HQS breach as identified in HUD Regulations is the responsibility of the family. Families may be given extensions to cure HQS breaches by the HA in accordance with HUD regulations.

Denial of Additions to the Household.

Proposed additions to the family may be denied to:

- Persons who have been evicted from public housing.
- Persons who engage in or have engaged in, alcohol or drug-related criminal activity or violent criminal activity.
- Persons who do not meet the HA's definition of family.
- Persons who commit or have committed fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program.
- Persons who currently owe rent or other amounts to the HA or to another HA in connection with Section 8 or Public Housing Assistance under the 1937 Act.
- Persons who have engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior toward HA personnel.

E. PROCEDURES FOR NON-CITIZENS

Termination due to Ineligible Immigrant Status

Assistance may not be terminated while verification of the participant family's eligible immigration status is pending. Participant families in which all members are neither U.S. citizens nor eligible immigrants must have their assistance terminated; however, they will be given an opportunity for a hearing.

False or Incomplete Information

When the HA has clear, concrete, or substantial documentation (such as permanent resident card or information from another agency) that contradicts the declaration of citizenship made by an applicant or participant, an investigation will be conducted and the individual given an opportunity to present relevant information.

If the individual is unable to verify their citizenship, the HA may give him/her an opportunity to provide a new declaration as an eligible immigrant or to elect not to contend their status. The HA will then verify eligible status, deny, terminate, or prorate as applicable. The HA will deny or terminate assistance based on the submission of false information or misrepresentations.

F. ZERO HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT FOR TENANTS

The HAP contract terminates automatically 180 calendar days after the last housing assistance payment to the owner. If within the 180 day time frame, the Total Tenant Payment causes the family to be eligible for a housing assistance payment, the HA will resume assistance payments for the family.

G. MISSED APPOINTMENTS AND DEADLINES

It is a family obligation to supply information, documentation, and certification as needed for the HA to fulfill its responsibilities. The HA schedules appointments and sets deadlines in order to obtain required information. The obligations also require that the family allow the HA to inspect the unit and appointments are made for this purpose.

If an applicant or participant does not keep an appointment, does not supply information required

by a deadline or does not allow the HA to inspect the unit, the HA may deny or terminate assistance. The family will be given information about the requirement to keep appointments as specified in this Plan.

Appointments may be scheduled and time requirements will be imposed for the following events and circumstances:

- Eligibility for Admissions
- Verification Procedures
- Voucher Issuance and Briefing
- Housing Quality Standards and Inspections
- Re-certifications
- Appeals

Procedure when Family Obligations are not met

When the participant family fails to fulfill their obligations within the time frames established by the HA, a “Pre-Termination of Assistance” appointment will be scheduled for the family. The appointment notice shall inform the family of the obligation not met and the necessary remedy. If the obligation is still not met, a Notice of Intent to Terminate Assistance will be issued. If the family corrects the breach within the time frame allowed for requesting a hearing, the notice may be rescinded. The HA will consider whether the family has a history of non-compliance in making determinations to terminate assistance.

At the same time that the family is notified of a breach in their obligations, a “Conditional Termination of Contract” notice will be sent to the owner. This notice will inform the owner that should the family fail to comply with their obligations, the contract will end. The notice will state the last day payment will be made on behalf of the family.

Chapter 16

OWNER DISAPPROVAL AND RESTRICTIONS

INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of the HA to recruit owners to participate in the program, and to provide owners with prompt and professional service in order to maintain an adequate supply of available housing throughout the jurisdiction of the HA. The regulations define when the HA must disallow an owner participation in the program, and they provide the HA discretion to disapprove or otherwise restrict the participation of owners in certain categories. This chapter describes the criteria for owner disapproval and the various penalties for owner violations.

A. DISAPPROVAL OF OWNER

The owner does not have a right to participate in the program. For purposes of this section, “owner” includes a principal or other interested party.

The HA will disapprove the owner for the following reasons:

- HUD has informed the HA that the owner has been disbarred, suspended, or subject to a limited denial of participation under 24 CFR part 24.
- HUD has informed the HA that the Federal Government has instituted an administrative or judicial action against the owner for violation of the Fair Housing Act or other federal equal opportunity requirements and such action is pending.
- HUD has informed the HA that a court or administrative agency has determined that the owner has violated the Fair Housing Act or other federal equal opportunity requirements
- The owner has violated obligations under a housing assistance payments contract under Section 8 of the 1937 Act (42 U.S.C. 1437f).
- The owner has committed fraud, bribery or any other corrupt act in connection with any federal housing program.
- The owner has engaged in any drug-related criminal activity or any violent criminal activity.
- The owner has a history or practice of non-compliance with the HQS for units leased under the tenant-based programs or with applicable housing standards for units leased with project-based Section 8 assistance or leased under any other federal housing program.
- The owner has a history or practice of renting units that fail to meet state or local housing codes.
- The owner has not paid state or local real estate taxes, fines or assessments.
- HA has received evidence that owner is requesting and accepting side payments for rent.
- The owner has a history or practice of failing to terminate tenancy of tenants of units assisted under Section 8 or any other federally assisted housing program for activity by the tenant, any member of the household, a guest or another person under the control of any member of the household that:
 - Threatens the health or safety of, or the right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents
 - Threatens the health or safety of other residents, or employees of the HA, or of owner employees or other persons engaged in management of the housing
 - Threatens the health or safety of, or the right to peaceful enjoyment of their

residences, by persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises

-Engages in drug-related criminal activity or violent criminal activity

- HUD regulations prohibit the HA from approving a unit if the owner is the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister, brother, uncle, aunt, or in-law of any member of the tenant family, unless the HA determines that approving the unit would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities.

B. OWNER RESTRICTIONS AND PENALTIES

If an owner commits fraud or abuse or is guilty of frequent or serious contract violations, the HA will restrict the owner from future participation in the program. The HA may also terminate some or all contracts with the owner.

Before imposing a penalty against an owner, the HA will review all relevant factors pertaining to the case, and will consider such factors as the owner’s record of compliance and the number of violations.

C. OTHER REMEDIES FOR OWNER VIOLATIONS

Overpayments

If the landlord has been overpaid as a result of fraud, misrepresentation or violation of the Contract, the HA may terminate the Contract and arrange for restitution to the HA and/or family as appropriate.

The HA will make every effort to recover any overpayments made as a result of landlord fraud or abuse. Payments otherwise due to the owner may be debited from future payments in order to repay the HA or the tenant, as applicable. The HA will take court action to recover overpayments when other means fail to result in such collection.

Chapter 17

OWNER OR FAMILY DEBTS TO THE HA

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the HA's policies for the recovery of monies which have been overpaid for families and to owners. It describes the methods that will be utilized for collection of monies and the guidelines for different types of debts. Before a debt is assessed against a family or owner, the file must contain documentation to support the HA's claim that the debt is owed. The file must further contain written documentation of the method of calculation, in a clear format for review by the owner, the family or other interested parties.

The HA will make every effort to collect monies owed to the HA. The HA will use a variety of collection tools to recover debts including, but not limited to:

- Requests for lump sum payments
- Civil suits
- Repayment agreements
- Abatements
- Collection agencies
- Credit bureaus
- Income tax set-off programs

A. REPAYMENT AGREEMENT FOR FAMILIES

A Repayment Agreement as used in this Plan is a document entered into between the HA and a person who owes a debt to the HA. It is similar to a promissory note, but contains more details regarding the nature of the debt, the terms of repayment, any special provisions of the agreement, and the remedies available to the HA upon default of the agreement.

The maximum length of time the HA will enter into a repayment agreement with a family is 12 months. Signing a Repayment Agreement does not guarantee continued assistance.

Late Payments

A payment will be considered to be in arrears if the payment has not been received by the close of the business day on which the payment was due. If the due date is on a weekend or holiday, the due date will be at the close of the next business day.

If the family's repayment agreement is in arrears, the HA may require the family to pay in full. If the family requests a move to another unit and has a repayment agreement in place, the family will be required to pay the balance in full prior to the issuance of a Voucher.

B. DEBTS DUE TO FRAUD/NON-REPORTING OF INFORMATION

HUD's definition of program fraud and abuse is a single act or pattern of actions that constitutes false statement, omission, or concealment of a substantive fact, made with intent to deceive or mislead.

Program Fraud

Families who owe money to the HA due to program fraud will be required to repay in accordance with the guidelines in the Repayment Section of this chapter and may be terminated from the housing assistance program.

If a family owes \$5,000 or more as a result of program fraud, the case may be referred to the HUD Inspector General. Where appropriate, the HA may refer the case for criminal prosecution.

C. OWNER DEBTS TO THE HA

If the HA determines that the owner has retained Housing Assistance Payments the owner is not entitled to, the HA may reclaim the amounts from future Housing Assistance Payments owed the owner for any units under contract.

If future Housing Assistance Payments are insufficient to reclaim the amounts owed, the HA may:

- Require the owner to pay the amount in full within a maximum of 12 months
- Pursue collections through the court system
- Restrict the owner from future participation

Chapter 18

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

INTRODUCTION

The informal hearing requirements defined in HUD regulations are applicable to participating families who disagree with an action, decision, or inaction of the HA. This chapter describes the policies, procedures and standards to be used when families disagree with a HA decision. The procedures and requirements are explained for preference denial meetings, informal reviews and hearings. It is the policy of the HA to ensure that all families have the benefit of all protections due to them under the law.

A. COMPLAINTS TO THE HA

The HA will respond promptly to complaints from families, owners, employees, and members of the public. All complaints will be documented. The HA prefers that all complaints be put in writing, however, they may be reported by telephone. Complaints that cannot be substantiated will be so noted.

Categories of Complaints

Complaints from families, owners, or the general public will be referred to the Housing Specialist first. Unresolved complaints or those involving a staff member will be referred to a Housing Supervisor or Internal Program Review Operation (IPRO).

Any complaints of racial, ethnic or sexual harassment involving staff will be handled according to County personnel policies. Any complaints regarding racial, ethnic or sexual harassment not involving staff will be documented, referred to Fair Housing and/or Legal Aid, and will be reviewed by supervisory staff.

B. PREFERENCE DENIALS (CFR 982.554)

When the HA denies a preference to an applicant, the family will be notified in writing of the specific reason for the denial and offered the opportunity for an informal review with an HA staff person to discuss the reasons for the denial and to dispute the HA's decision. If the decision to deny is upheld, the applicant's name will be withdrawn from the waiting list, and an opportunity for an informal review will be given.

C. INFORMAL REVIEW

The HA must give an applicant an opportunity for an informal review of the HA decision denying assistance to the applicant. After review, the applicant will be furnished with a written final decision including a statement of the reasons for the final decision.

The HA is not required to provide the applicant an opportunity for an informal review for any of the following:

1. Discretionary administrative determinations by the HA.
2. General policy issues or class grievances.

3. A determination of the family unit size under the HA subsidy standards.
4. An HA determination not to approve an extension or suspension of a voucher term.
5. An HA determination not to grant approval to lease a unit under the program or to approve a proposed lease.
6. HA determination that a unit selected by the applicant is not in compliance with HQS.
7. An HA determination that the unit is not in accordance with HQS because of the family size or composition.

Reviews are provided for applicants who are denied assistance before the effective date of the HAP Contract. The exception is that when an applicant is denied assistance for citizenship or eligible immigration status, the applicant is entitled to an informal hearing.

D. INFORMAL HEARING

The HA must provide participants with the opportunity for an informal hearing for decisions related to any of the following:

1. A determination of the family's annual or adjusted income, and the use of such income to compute the housing assistance payment.
2. A determination of the appropriate utility allowance (if any) for tenant-paid utilities from the HA utility allowance schedule.
3. A determination of the family unit size under HA subsidy standards.
4. A determination to terminate assistance for a participant family because of the family's action or failure to act.
5. A determination to terminate assistance because the participant family has been absent from the assisted unit for longer than the maximum period permitted under HA policy and HUD rules.

The HA will give the family prompt notice of such determinations which will include:

- The proposed action or decision of the HA.
- The date the proposed action or decision will take place.
- The family's right to an explanation of the basis for the HA's decision.
- The procedures for requesting a hearing if the family disputes the action or decision.
- The time limit for requesting the hearing.
- To whom the hearing request should be addressed.

The HA is not required to provide a participant family an opportunity for an informal hearing for any of the following:

8. Discretionary administrative determinations by the HA.
9. General policy issues or class grievances.
10. Establishment of the HA schedule of utility allowances for families in the program.
11. An HA determination not to approve an extension or suspension of a Voucher term.
12. An HA determination not to approve a unit or lease.
13. An HA determination that an assisted unit is not in compliance with HQS. However, the HA must provide the opportunity for an informal hearing for a decision to terminate assistance for a breach of the HQS caused by the family as described in 24 CFR 982.551.

14. An HA determination that the unit is not in accordance with HQS because of the family size.
15. A determination by the HA to exercise or not to exercise any right or remedy against the owner under a HAP contract.

E. INFORMAL REVIEW/HEARING PROCEDURES

It is the HA's objective to resolve disputes at the lowest level possible. Informal reviews are granted to applicants and informal hearings are granted to participants. The HA will ensure that applicants and participants will receive all of the protections and rights afforded by the law and the regulations.

Notification of Review/Hearing

When the HA determines that an applicant is denied assistance, and for participants, other specified actions, the family must be notified in writing. The notice must contain:

- The reason(s) the action is being taken,
- The procedure for requesting an informal review/hearing if the applicant/participant does not agree with the decision, and
- The time limit for requesting a review/hearing.

A request for an informal review/hearing must be received in writing by the close of the business day, no later than 10 calendar days from the date of the HA's notification of denial of assistance or intent to terminate assistance. For informal hearings, the information packet must be submitted to the hearing officer by the HA within 5 business days of receipt of the request for hearing. An appointment will be scheduled and a letter will be sent by the hearing officer within 5 business days from the date the information packet is received and the informal hearing will be conducted no more than 14 calendar days from the date the appointment letter is sent. For informal reviews, the review must be performed within 14 calendar days from the date the review is requested and the results sent to the applicant by mail within 10 business days after the review. The review will be performed in person unless the applicant requests either a review by phone or letter. The informal review/hearing shall be conducted by the review/hearing officer appointed by the HA who is neither the person who made nor approved the decision, nor a subordinate of that person. The HA appoints a review/hearing officer who is a staff person at the Housing Specialist II level or above, or an individual from outside the HA.

The review/hearing shall concern only the issues for which the family has received the opportunity for a review/hearing. Evidence presented at the review/hearing may be considered without regard to admissibility under the rules of evidence applicable to judicial proceedings.

The applicant/participant will be given the opportunity to present oral or written objections to the decision. Both the HA and the family may present evidence and witnesses. Both the HA and the family may use an attorney or other representative to assist them at their own expense.

A representative with written authorization to act on behalf of the applicant/participant may conduct an informal review/hearing in the absence of the applicant/participant, unless the representative has an interest in the rental assistance, i.e., the owner of the assisted unit.

When the hearing officer receives an information packet for an informal hearing, an informal hearing date will be scheduled and the notification will contain:

1. The date and time of the hearing.
2. The location where the hearing will be held.
3. The family's right to bring evidence, witnesses, legal or other representation at the family's expense.
4. The right to view any documents or evidence in the possession of the HA upon which the HA based the proposed action, and to obtain a copy of such documents prior to the review/hearing. Such documents or evidence must be sent to the family no later than 7 days before the review/hearing date.
5. A notice to the family that the HA will request a copy of any documents or evidence the family will use at the review/hearing. Such documents or evidence must be received by the HA no later than 7 days before the review/hearing date.

After a review/hearing date is scheduled, the family may request to reschedule only upon showing "good cause," which is defined as an unavoidable conflict which seriously affects the health, safety or welfare of the family.

Family rights:

- Examine the documents in the file which are the basis for the HA's action, and all documents submitted to the Hearing Officer.
- The family must be allowed to copy any such document at the family's expense.

If the HA does not make the document available for examination on request of the family, the HA may not rely on the document at the hearing.

HA rights:

- Examine at HA offices before the HA hearing any family documents that are directly relevant to the hearing.
- The HA must be allowed to copy any such document at the HA's expense.

If the family does not make the document available for examination on request of the HA, the family may not rely on the document at the hearing.

The review/hearing officer will determine whether the action, inaction or decision of the HA is legal in accordance with HUD regulations and this Administrative Plan based upon the evidence and testimony provided at the review/hearing.

A notice of the review/hearing findings shall be provided in writing to the HA and the family within 10 business days and shall include a clear summary of the decision, reasons for the decision, and the amount of any money owed, if applicable.

When the HA is not bound by review/hearing decisions:

- Concerning matters in which the HA is not required to provide an opportunity for a hearing.
- Which conflict with or contradict HUD regulations or requirements.
- Which conflict with or contradict federal, state or local laws.
- Which exceed the authority of the person conducting the review/hearing.

The HA shall send a letter to the applicant/participant if it determines the HA is not bound by the review/hearing officer's determination within 21 calendar days. The letter shall include the HA's reasons for the decision with a copy to the review/hearing officer.

All requests for a review/hearing, supporting documentation, and a copy of the final decision will be retained in the family's file.

F. HEARING AND APPEAL PROVISIONS FOR RESTRICTIONS ON ASSISTANCE TO NON-CITIZENS

Assistance to the family may not be delayed, denied or terminated on the basis of immigration status at any time prior to the receipt of the decision of the INS appeal.

Assistance to a family may not be terminated or denied while the informal hearing is pending but assistance to an applicant may be delayed pending the informal hearing.

INS Determination of Ineligibility

If a family member claims to be an eligible immigrant and the INS SAVE system and manual search do not verify the claim, the HA notifies the applicant or participant within 10 calendar days of their right to appeal to the INS within 30 calendar days or to request an informal hearing with the HA either in lieu of or subsequent to the INS appeal.

If the family appeals to INS, they must give the HA a copy of the appeal and proof of mailing or the HA may proceed to deny or terminate. The time period to request an appeal may be extended by the HA for good cause.

The request for an HA hearing must be made within 10 calendar days of receipt of the notice offering the hearing or, if an appeal was made to the INS, within 10 calendar days of receipt of that notice.

After receipt of a request for an informal hearing, the hearing is conducted as described in this plan for both applicants and participants. If the hearing officer decides that the individual is not eligible, and there are no other eligible family members, the HA will deny the applicant family. If there are eligible members in the family, the HA will offer to prorate assistance or give the family the option to remove the ineligible members.

If any family member fails to provide documentation or certification of eligible citizenship/immigration as required by the regulation, that member is treated as ineligible. If all family members fail to provide documentation or certification, the family will be denied or

terminated.

Participants whose assistance is prorated (either based on their statement that some members are ineligible or due to failure to verify eligible immigration status for some members after exercising their appeal and hearing rights described above) are entitled to a hearing based on the right to a hearing regarding determinations of tenant rent and total tenant payment.

Families denied or terminated for fraud in connection with the non-citizens rule are entitled to a review or hearing in the same way as terminations for any other type of fraud.

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

ABSORPTION: The point at which a receiving HA stops billing the initial HA for assistance on behalf of a portability family. The receiving HA uses funds available under the receiving HA consolidated ACC.

ACC RESERVE ACCOUNT (formerly Project Reserve): Account established by HUD from amounts by which the maximum payment to the HA under the consolidated ACC (during an HA fiscal year) exceeds the amount actually approved and paid. This account is used as the source of additional payments for the program.

ADJUSTED INCOME: Annual income, less allowable HUD deductions.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEE: Fee paid by HUD to the HA for administration of the program.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEE RESERVE (formerly Operating Reserve): Account established by HA from excess administrative fee income. The administrative fee reserve must be used for housing purposes.

ADMISSION: The effective date of the first HAP contract for a family (first day of initial lease term) in a tenant-based program. This is the point when the family becomes a participant in the program.

ALCOHOL ABUSE: HACR has determined that a pattern of alcohol abuse exists when there are two or more criminal charges involving alcohol during a three year period.

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS CONTRACT (ACC): A written contract between HUD and an HA. Under the contract HUD agrees to provide funding for operation of the program, and the HA agrees to comply with HUD requirements for the program.

ANNUAL INCOME: The anticipated total Annual Income of an eligible family from all sources for the 12-month period following the date of determination of income, computed in accordance with the regulations.

APPLICANT (or applicant family): A family that has applied for admission to a program, but is not yet a participant in the program.

ASSETS: (See Net Family Assets.)

ASSISTED TENANT: A tenant who pays less than the market rent as defined in the regulations. Includes tenants receiving rent supplement, Rental Assistance Payments, or Section 8 assistance and all other 236 and 221 (d)(3) BMIR tenants, except those paying the 236 market rent or 120 percent of the BMIR rent, respectively.

BUDGET AUTHORITY: An amount authorized and appropriated by the Congress for payment to the HA under the program. For each funding increment in an HA program, budget authority is the maximum amount that may be paid by HUD to the HA over the ACC term of the funding increment.

CHILD: A member of the family other than the head or spouse who is under 18 years of age.

CHILD CARE EXPENSES: Reasonable amounts (based on average county wide costs determined by a yearly survey of child care providers and not exceeding the earned income) paid by the family for the care of minors under 13 years of age where such care is necessary to enable a family member to be employed or for a household member to further his/her education.

CITIZEN: A citizen or national of the United States.

CO-HEAD: One additional adult in the household who is equally responsible for the lease with the Head of Household. A Co-head does not qualify the family as a disabled household and consequently does not receive a \$400 annual allowance.

CONTINUOUSLY ASSISTED: If the family is already receiving assistance under any 1937 Housing Act program when admitted to the Voucher program than the applicant is considered continuously assisted under the 1937 Housing Act.

CONTRACT: (See Housing Assistance Payments Contract.)

CONTRACT AUTHORITY: The maximum annual payment by HUD to an HA for a funding increment.

CONTRACT RENT: Contract Rent is the total rent paid to the owner, including the tenant payment and the HAP payment from the HA.

COVERED PERSON: A tenant, any member of the tenant's household, a guest or another person under the tenant's control.

DATING VIOLENCE: Violence committed by a person (A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and (B) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors: (i) The length of the relationship; (ii) the type of the relationship; and (iii) the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

DEPENDENT: A member of the family household (excluding foster children) other than the family head or spouse, who is under 18 years of age or is a disabled person or handicapped person, or is a full-time student 18 years of age or over.

DISABLED PERSON: A person who is any of the following:

1. A person who has a disability as defined in Section 223 of the Social Security Act. (42 U.S.C. 423).
2. A person who has a physical, mental, or emotional impairment that:
 - a. Is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration;
 - b. Substantially impedes his or her ability to live independently; and
 - c. Is of such a nature that ability to live independently could be improved by more suitable housing conditions.
3. A person who has a developmental disability as defined in section 102(7) of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (42 U.S.C. 6001(7)).

DISPLACED PERSON: A person displaced by governmental action, or a person whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized under federal disaster relief laws.

DOMICILE: The legal residence of the household head or spouse as determined in accordance with state and local law.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: Felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.

DRUG: A controlled substance as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

DRUG-RELATED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY: The illegal manufacture, sale, distribution, or use of a drug, or the possession of a drug with intent to manufacture, sell, distribute or use the drug.

ELDERLY/DISABLED FAMILY: A family whose head or spouse or whose sole member is an elderly person, a disabled person, or a handicapped person as defined in this section; or may be two or more elderly, disabled or handicapped persons living together; or one or more such persons living with another person who is determined to be essential to his/her care and well being.

ELDERLY PERSON: A person who is at least 62 years old.

EVIDENCE OF CITIZENSHIP: Evidence of citizenship or eligible immigration status means the documents that must be submitted to verify citizenship or eligible immigration status.

EXCESS MEDICAL EXPENSES: Any medical expenses incurred by elderly or disabled families only, in excess of 3 percent of annual income that are not reimbursable from any other source.

EXTREMELY ELDERLY FAMILY: A family whose head or spouse or whose sole member is person who is at least 72 years old.

EXTREMELY LOW INCOME: A family whose annual income does not exceed 30 percent of the median income for the area, as determined by HUD, with adjustments for smaller and larger families.

FAIR MARKET RENT (FMR): The rent including the cost of utilities (except telephone) that would be required to be paid in the housing market area to obtain privately owned existing decent, safe and sanitary rental housing of modest (non-luxury) nature with suitable amenities. Fair market rents for existing housing are established by HUD for housing units of varying sizes (number of bedrooms) and are published annually in the *Federal Register* in accordance with HUD regulations.

FAMILY: The applicant must qualify as a family as defined in Chapter 2 of this Administrative Plan. Family is used interchangeably with “Applicant” or “Participant” and can refer to a group of persons or a single person family.

FAMILY OF VETERAN OR SERVICE PERSON: A family is a family of a veteran or service person when:

1. The veteran or service person (a) is either the head of household or related to the head of the household; or (b) is deceased and was related to the head of the household, and was a family member at the time of death.
2. The veteran or service person, unless deceased, is living with the family or is only temporarily absent unless she/he was (a) formerly the head of the household and is permanently absent because of hospitalization, separation, or desertion, or is divorced; provided, the family contains one or more persons for whose support she/he is legally responsible and the spouse has not remarried; or (b) not the head of the household, but is permanently hospitalized; provided, that she/he was a family member at the time of hospitalization and at least one related person remains in the family.

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM (FSS PROGRAM): The program established by an HA to promote self-sufficiency of assisted families, including the provision of supportive services.

FOSTER CHILD: Child whose care, comfort, education, and upbringing has been left to persons other than his natural parents. All foster care income of is excluded.

FOSTER CHILD CARE PAYMENT: Payment to eligible households by state, local, or private agencies appointed by the State, to administer payments for the care of foster children.

FULL-TIME STUDENT: A person who is carrying a subject load that is considered full time for day students under the standards and practices of the educational institution attended. An educational institution includes a vocational school with a diploma or certificate program, as well as an institution offering a college degree.

FUNDING INCREMENT: Each commitment of budget authority by HUD to an HA under the consolidated annual contributions contract for the HA program.

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT: Employed and working an average of 32 hours per week.

GROSS RENT: The sum of the Contract Rent plus the current utility allowance. If there is no utility allowance, Contract Rent equals Gross Rent. The Gross Rent will be used as the payment standard when it is less than the authorized payment standard.

GUEST: A person temporarily staying in the unit with the consent of a tenant or other member of the household who has express or implied authority to so consent on behalf of the tenant.

HA: A Housing Authority - either a Public Housing Agency or an Indian Housing Authority or both. The Housing Authority of the County of Riverside is referred to as “HA” or “Housing Authority” throughout this document.

HANDICAP ASSISTANCE: Anticipated costs for care aides and auxiliary apparatus for handicapped or disabled family members that enable a family member (including the handicapped family member) to work.

HANDICAPPED PERSON: [Referred to as a Person with a Disability]. A person having a physical or mental impairment which:

1. Is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration;
2. Substantially impedes his or her ability to live independently; and
3. Is of such nature that such ability could be improved by more suitable housing conditions.

HAP CONTRACT: (See Housing Assistance Payments Contract.)

HARD TO HOUSE: Families with three or more minor children are considered a hard to house family. Families that have a disabled person are considered as a hard to house family. Special assistance will be given to these families in finding a rental unit other than their pre-program unit.

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD: The head of household is the person who assumes legal and financial responsibility for the household and is listed on the application as head.

HOMELESS: Any person or family that: 1) lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence; and 2) has a primary nighttime residence that is: (a) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing); (b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for persons intended to be institutionalized; or (c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

HOUSEHOLD: All persons living in the assisted home who have been authorized by the HA. Any person living in the household without permission of the HA is considered an unauthorized household member.

HOUSING AGENCY: A state, county, municipality or other governmental entity or public body authorized to administer the program. The term “HA” includes an Indian housing authority (IHA). (HA and PHA mean the same thing.)

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1974: Act in which the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 (sometimes referred to as the Act) was recodified, and which added the Section 8 Programs.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT: The monthly assistance payment by an HA. The total assistance payment consists of:

1. A payment to the owner for rent to owner under the family’s lease
2. An additional payment to the family if the total assistance payment exceeds the rent to owner. The additional payment is called a utility reimbursement payment.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS CONTRACT: (HAP Contract). A written contract between the HA and an owner in the form prescribed by HUD, in which the HA agrees to make housing assistance payments to the owner on behalf of an eligible family.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PLAN: (1) A Housing Assistance Plan submitted by a local government participating in the Community Development Block Program as part of the block grant application, in accordance with the requirements of 570.303(c) submitted by a local government not participating in the Community Development Block Grant Program and approved by HUD. (2) A Housing Assistance Plan meeting the requirements of 570.303(c) submitted by a local government not participating in the Community Development Block Grant Program and approved by HUD.

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS): The HUD minimum quality standards for housing assisted under the tenant-based programs.

HUD: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

HUD REQUIREMENTS: HUD requirements for the Section 8 programs. HUD requirements are issued by HUD headquarters as regulations, Federal Register notices or other binding program directives.

IMPUTED ASSET: Asset disposed of for less than Fair Market Value during the two years preceding examination or reexamination and valued at more than \$5,000.

IMPUTED ASSET INCOME: HUD passbook rate times total cash value of assets. Imputed asset income is used when assets exceed \$5,000.

IMPUTED WELFARE INCOME: The difference between the actual welfare grant received by the family and the amount that would be received by the family if a family member was not sanctioned for fraud, or failure to participate in an economic self sufficiency program, or comply with a work activities requirement.

INCOME: Income from all sources of each member of the household as determined in accordance with HUD regulations for included and excluded income.

INCOME FOR ELIGIBILITY: Annual Gross Income.

INDIAN: Any person recognized as an Indian or Alaska Native by an Indian Tribe, the Federal Government, or any State.

INDIAN HOUSING AUTHORITY (IHA): A housing agency established either:

1. By exercise of the power of self-government of an Indian Tribe, independent of state law, or
2. By operation of state law providing specifically for housing authorities for Indians

INTEREST REDUCTION SUBSIDIES: The monthly payments or discounts made by HUD to reduce the debt service payments and, hence, rents required on Section 236 and 221 (d)(3) BMIR projects. Includes monthly interest reduction payments made to mortgagees of Section 236 projects and front-end loan discounts paid on BMIR projects.

INS: The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service

LANDLORD: This term means either the owner of the property or his/her representative or the managing agent or his/her representative, as shall be designated by the owner. “Landlord” and “Owner” are used interchangeably. See definition of Owner.

LEASE: A written agreement between an owner and an eligible family for the leasing of a housing unit. The Section 8 Voucher program has an Addendum to the Lease that has mandatory language that must be incorporated into any lease the HA uses.

LIVE-IN AIDE: A person who resides with an elderly person or disabled person and who:

1. Is determined to be essential to the care and well being of the person
2. Is not obligated for the support of the person
3. Would not be living in the unit except to provide necessary supportive services
4. Is recommended by a medical professional

LOCAL PREFERENCE: A preference used by the HA to select among applicant families.

LOW-INCOME FAMILY: A family whose annual income does not exceed 80 percent of the median income for the area, as determined by HUD, with adjustments for smaller and larger families. For admission to the Section 8 program, HUD may establish income limits higher or lower than 80 percent of the median income for the area on the basis of its finding that such variations are necessary because of the prevailing levels of construction costs or unusually high or low family incomes.

MARKET RENT: The rent HUD authorizes the owner of FHA insured/subsidized multi-family housing to collect from families ineligible for assistance. For unsubsidized units in a FHA-insured multi-family project in which a portion of the total units receive project-based rental assistance, under the Rental Supplement or Section 202/Section 8 Programs, the Market Rate Rent is that rent approved by HUD and is the Contract Rent for Section 8. For BMIR units, Market Rent varies by whether the project is a rental or cooperative.

MEDICAL EXPENSE: Those total medical expenses, including medical insurance premiums that are anticipated during the period for which Annual Income is computed, and that are not covered by insurance.

MINOR: A member of the family household (excluding foster children) other than the family head or spouse who is under 18 years of age.

MIXED FAMILY: A family whose members include those with citizenship or eligible immigration status and those without citizenship or eligible immigration status.

MONTHLY ADJUSTED INCOME: 1/12 of the annual income after allowances or adjusted income.

MONTHLY INCOME: 1/12 of the annual gross income.

NATIONAL: A person who owes permanent allegiance to the United States, for example, as a result of birth in a United States territory or possession.

NET FAMILY ASSETS: Value of equity in savings, checking, IRA and Keogh accounts, real property, stocks, bonds, and other forms of capital investment. The value of necessary items of personal property such as furniture and automobiles is excluded from the definition.

NON-CITIZEN: A person who is neither a citizen nor national of the United States.

NUCLEUS FAMILY: All family members at the time of initial voucher issuance (Intake) plus any members added by marriage, birth, adoption, or court awarded custody.

OCCUPANCY STANDARDS: [Now referred to as Subsidy Standards] Standards established by an HA to determine the appropriate number of bedrooms for households. The subsidy standards must provide for the smallest number of bedrooms needed to house a family without overcrowding.

OTHER PERSON UNDER THE TENANT'S CONTROL: A person, although not staying as a guest in the unit, who is, or was at the time of the activity in question, on the premises because of an invitation from the tenant or other member of the household who has express or implied authority to so consent on behalf of the tenant. Absent evidence to the contrary, a person temporarily and infrequently on the premises solely for legitimate commercial purposes is not under the tenant's control.

OWNER: Any persons or entity having the legal right to lease or sublease housing.

PARTICIPANT: A family that has been admitted to the HA's Section 8 program. The family becomes a participant on the effective date of the first HAP contract executed by the HA for the family (First day of initial lease term).

PAYMENT STANDARD: The amount used to calculate the housing assistance a family will receive in the HA's Housing Voucher Program.

PREFERENCE: See Local Preference.

PREMISES: The building or complex or development in which the public or assisted housing dwelling unit is located, including common areas and grounds.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE: Welfare or other payments to families or individuals, based on need, which are made under programs funded, separately or jointly, by Federal, State or Local Governments.

PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY (PHA): A state, county, municipality, or other governmental entity or public body authorized to administer the programs. The term PHA includes an Indian Housing Authority (IHA). (HA and PHA mean the same thing.) In this rule, a PHA is referred to as a housing agency (HA).

RANKING PREFERENCE: A preference used by the HA to select among applicant families that qualify for a preference.

REASONABLE ACCOMODATION: In order to grant equal access and/or an equal opportunity to participate in the HCVP, the PHA will consider requests for reasonable accommodation (reasonable adjustments to the rules, policies, practices, procedures which do not reduce or waive the essential requirements of the program) by persons with disabilities. Accommodations are not reasonable if they require fundamental alterations in the nature of the program, or impose undue financial burdens on the PHA. Requests for reasonable accommodation will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

REMAINING MEMBER OF TENANT FAMILY: The remaining family member is a member of the family who remains in the assisted unit after the death of the Head of Household, or removal of the Head of Household to an assisted living environment, or government facility. To be considered the remaining member of the tenant family, the person must have been previously approved as part of the nucleus family by the HA and be currently living in the unit.

RENT BURDENED: Paying more than 50% of family income for rent and utilities. In order to be given the preference of rent burdened, a family must provide evidence that the family pay rent in a form that is verifiable such as cancelled checks or money order receipts for the last three months. In addition, verification of utility payments for the last year will be required for the current place in which the family resides (if the family has been in the current residence for less than a year,

verification of utility payments for the time the family has been in their current residence will be required).

RENT TO OWNER: The total amount of rent payable to the owner by the family and the HA per month for an assisted unit. Side payments are prohibited.

RESIDENCY PREFERENCE: Given to those applicants who, at the time of release from the waiting list, either: a) reside in the County of Riverside or b) work (head/spouse or sole member of the household is employed) or have been notified that they are hired to work in the County of Riverside. This residency preference will not have the purpose or effect of delaying or otherwise denying admission to the program based on race, color, ethnic origin, gender, religion, disability, or age of any member of an applicant family.

RESPONSIBLE ENTITY: The person or entity responsible for administering the restrictions on providing assistance to non-citizens with ineligible immigration status (the HA).

SECRETARY: The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

SECURITY DEPOSIT: A dollar amount that can be applied to unpaid rent, damages or other amounts to the owner under the lease.

SECTION 214: Section 214 restricts HUD from making financial assistance available for non-citizens unless they meet one of the categories of eligible immigration status specified in Section 214.

SERVICE PERSON: A person in the active military or naval service (including the active reserve) of the United States.

SINGLE PERSON: A person living alone or intending to live alone.

SPORADIC INCOME: Income that is not regularly received by the household but is received no more than six times in a year.

SPOUSE: The husband or wife of the head of the household. Spouse refers to the marriage partner, either a husband or wife, who is someone you need to divorce in order to dissolve the relationship. It does not cover boyfriends, girlfriends, significant others, or “co-heads” “Co-heads” is a term recognized by some HUD programs, but not by public and Indian housing programs.

STALKING: Stalking means (A) (i) to follow, pursue, or repeatedly commit acts with the intent to kill, injure, harass, or intimidate another person; or (ii) to place under surveillance with the intent to kill, injure, harass, or intimidate another person; and (B) in the course of, or as a result of, such following, pursuit, surveillance, or repeatedly committed acts, to place a person in reasonable fear of the death of, or serious bodily injury to, or to cause substantial emotional harm to (i) that person; (ii) a member of the immediate family of the person; or (iii) the spouse or intimate partner of that person. As used above, immediately family is defined to mean “with respect to a person (A) a

spouse, parent, brother or sister, or child of that person, or an individual to whom that person stands in loco parentis; or (B) any other person living in the household of that person and related to that person by blood or marriage.”

SUBSIDIZED PROJECT: A multi-family housing project (with the exception of a project owned by a cooperative housing mortgage corporation or association) that receives the benefit of subsidy in the form of:

1. Below-market interest is pursuant to Section 221(d)(3) and (5) or interest reduction payments pursuant to Section 236 of the National Housing Act; or
2. Rent supplement payments under Section 101 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965; or
3. Direct loans pursuant to Section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959; or
4. Payments under the Section 23 Housing Assistance Payments Program pursuant to Section 23 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 prior to amendment by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974;
5. Payments under the Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Program pursuant to Section 8 of the United States Housing Act after amendment by the Housing and Community Development act unless the project is owned by a Public Housing Agency;
6. A Public Housing Project.

SUBSIDY STANDARDS: Standards established by an HA to determine the appropriate number of bedrooms for households. The subsidy standards must provide for the smallest number of bedrooms needed to house a family without overcrowding.

TENANT: Tenant is used to refer to participants in terms of their relation to landlords as lessee.

TENANT RENT (Also called Net Family Contribution): The amount payable monthly by the family as rent to the owner (including a HA in other programs). Where all utilities (except telephone) and other essential housing services are supplied by the owner, tenant rent equals total tenant payment. Where some of all utilities (except telephone) and other essential housing services are not supplied by the owner and the cost thereof is not included in the amount paid as rent to the owner, tenant rent equals total tenant payment less the utility allowance in the Certificate program. In the Voucher program, tenant rent is rent to owner less HAP.

TOTAL TENANT PAYMENT (TTP): The amount the HUD rent formula requires the tenant to pay toward rent and utilities.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING: A housing unit located in a building that contains sleeping accommodations, kitchen, and bathroom facilities. Used exclusively to facilitate the transition of homeless individuals to independent living within twenty-four (24) months and where a governmental body or qualified nonprofit organization provides those individuals with temporary housing and supportive services to assist them in finding and keeping permanent housing.

UNIT: Residential space for the private use of a family.

UTILITIES: Utilities means water, electricity, gas, other heating, refrigeration, cooking fuels, trash collection and sewage service. Telephone and cable service are not included as utilities.

UTILITY ALLOWANCE: If the cost of utilities (except telephone) including range and refrigerator, and other housing services for an assisted unit is not included in the tenant rent but is the responsibility of the family occupying the unit, an amount equal to the estimate made or approved by a HA or HUD of the monthly cost of a reasonable consumption of such utilities and other services for the unit by an energy-conservative household of modest circumstances consistent with the requirements of a safe, sanitary, and healthy living environment.

UTILITY REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENT: The amount, if any, by which the utility allowance for the unit, if applicable, exceeds the Total Tenant Payment for the family occupying the unit.

VAWA: Violence Against Women's Act

VERY LOW INCOME FAMILY: A lower-income family whose annual income does not exceed 50 percent of the median income for the area, as determined by HUD, with adjustments for smaller and larger families. HUD may establish income limits higher or lower than 50 percent of the median income for the area on the basis of its finding that such variations are necessary because of unusually high or low family incomes. This is the income limit for the Voucher program.

VETERAN: A person who meets the definition of a veteran according to California Military and Veterans Code Section 980

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=mvc&group=00001-01000&file=980-980.5>

VIOLENT CRIMINAL ACTIVITY: Any criminal activity that has as one of its elements the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force substantial enough to cause, or be reasonably likely to cause, serious bodily injury or property damage.

VOUCHER HOLDER: A family holding a Voucher with unexpired search time.

WAITING LIST: A list of families organized according to HUD regulations and HA policy who are waiting for subsidy to become available.

WELFARE ASSISTANCE: Welfare or other payments to families or individuals, based on need, that are made under programs funded, separately or jointly, by Federal, State, or local Governments.

WORKING FAMILIES: A family in which the head, spouse or sole member is employed and is working at least 32 hours per week at California minimum wage or higher for the last 60 days, or receiving State Disability or Workman's Compensation in lieu of earnings provided that the person was employed and working at least 32 hours per week at California minimum wage for 60 days prior to receiving State Disability or Workman's Compensation.

APPENDIX B: CODE OF CONDUCT

The Housing Authority of the County of Riverside strives to conduct business in accordance with core values and ethical standards. Professional conduct, ethical practices and adherence to all laws, regulations, and government codes are expected by all employees at all times. To ensure compliance with these standards, the following policies have been established:

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES:

1. Employees shall not engage in any employment, activity, or enterprise for compensation which is inconsistent, incompatible, in conflict with, or inimical to his or her duties, functions, or responsibilities in a position with the Housing Authority. Employees shall not perform any work, service or counsel for compensation outside of the agency where any part of his/her efforts will be subject to approval by any other officer, employee, board, or commission of this Housing Authority.
2. Prohibited activities shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. Acceptance of money or other consideration from anyone other than the Housing Authority for the performance of duties required or expected of him/her in the regular course of Housing Authority employment.
 - b. Performance of an act in other than his/her capacity as an officer or employee which act may later be subject directly or indirectly to the control, inspection, review, audit, or enforcement of any other officer or employee of the Housing Authority.
 - c. Any act wherein time demands would render performance of his or her duties as an officer or employee less efficient and productive.
 - d. Embezzlement and falsification of accounts as defined in the California Penal Code.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

1. To avoid potential conflicts of interest, or the appearance of such, it is the policy of this Housing Authority that:
 - A. No employee shall enter into any agreement, written or unwritten, without prior approval from the Assistant Executive Director or his designee, that involves any direct payment or other form of compensation as a result of any program administered by this Housing Authority, either directly or indirectly, through agreements with other parties.
 - B. No employee, officer, or agent of the Housing Authority shall participate directly or indirectly in the selection, award or administration of any contract if a conflict,

real or perceived, would be involved. Such conflict would arise when a financial or other interest in the execution of a contract or in Housing Authority program participation is held by:

- (1) An employee, officer, or agent involved in making the award;
- (2) The relative of such a person (including, but not limited to, spouse or domestic partner or significant other, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, or half sister);
- (3) The business partner of such a person; or someone with an interest in,
- (4) An organization which employs, is negotiating to employ, or has an arrangement concerning prospective employment of any of the above.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF RULE VIOLATIONS:

Any violation of prohibited activities shall be handled as for the acts set out under Section 2.I. (3) of the Agency's personnel policies on Discipline, Dismissal, and Review.

APPENDIX C: ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE AMENDED POLICY ON ZERO TOLERANCE OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

April 15, 2008

PURPOSE

To establish a Housing Authority (HA) policy for zero tolerance of violent and drug-related criminal activity or any criminal activity that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of other residents or others in the immediate vicinity in any housing program administered by the Housing Authority. Criminal activity as listed above, misdemeanor and felony the same, will hereinafter be called "prohibited criminal activity." "Minor traffic offenses" may include offenses such as parking violations, registration violations or failure to provide proof of insurance. Traffic offenses that include illegal use of controlled substances or alcohol related violations of traffic laws are not considered minor. Two or more alcohol related criminal actions within a three year period constitute an abuse of alcohol. All persons receiving rental assistance, regardless of age, will be held to the same standard. Persons convicted of manufacturing or producing methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing will be permanently denied admission to any federally assisted housing program. Persons convicted of sex offenses that require a lifetime registration as a sex offender are prohibited from participation in any housing assistance programs administered by the Housing Authority in accordance with Federal Regulations. Exceptions in this policy do not apply to registered sex offenders or any person who was convicted of manufacturing or producing methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) prohibits the eviction of, and removal of assistance from, victims living in public or Section 8 assisted housing if the asserted grounds for such action is an instance of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

BACKGROUND

The primary mission of the Housing Authority is to assist low and moderate income families, including elderly and disabled persons, by operating programs which provide them decent, safe and sanitary housing at affordable costs. The programs currently administered by the Housing Authority include the following: Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher, Affordable Public Housing, MOD Rehab, Project-based, Family Unification, Emergency Response, Housing Opportunities for Persons with Aids (HOPWA), Shelter Plus Care and Mainstream Vouchers.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside that:

Prohibited criminal activity will not be tolerated. The Housing Authority will foster crime-free housing by implementing aggressive strategies which will reflect a zero tolerance of prohibited criminal activity by:

The Housing Authority may deny assistance to any household containing a member that has a

history of criminal activity involving crimes of physical violence to persons or property and other criminal acts which would adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of other tenants. {24 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 960.202a(2)iii & 203c}.

1. Denying or terminating rental assistance to all households containing a member that has engaged in prohibited criminal activity, unless that member can demonstrate the following:
 - a. Evidence of crime-free living within the last three years and no occurrence of criminal behavior (other than minor traffic offenses), **and**
 - b. Applicant/tenant must not have been incarcerated (in custody or doing any jail time) during the last three years for any action related to any prohibited criminal activity; **and**
 - c. Satisfactory adherence to all court and probation/parole mandated conditions for any action related to any prohibited criminal activity;

2. Denying or terminating tenancy, in any Housing Authority owned rental unit, to any household containing a member that has engaged in prohibited criminal activity, and who has a history or pattern of criminal activity which would adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of other tenants, unless that member can demonstrate the following:
 - a. Evidence of crime-free living within the last three years and no occurrence of criminal behavior (other than minor traffic offenses), **and**
 - b. Applicant/tenant must not have been incarcerated (in custody or doing any jail time) during the last three years for any action related to any prohibited criminal activity; **and**
 - c. Would not be a detriment to the health, safety, or welfare of his neighbors or the community in which they live; whose expected behavior would not have an adverse influence upon sound family and community life; who would not be a source of danger to the peaceful occupancy by the other tenants or cause damage to the premises or property of the Housing Authority or the immediate vicinity; **and**
 - d. Satisfactory adherence to all court and probation/parole mandated conditions for any action related to any prohibited criminal activity;

3. Criminal activity directly relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, engaged in by a member of a tenant's household or any guest or other person under the tenant's control shall not be cause for termination of assistance, tenancy, or occupancy rights if the tenant or an immediate member of the tenant's family is the victim or threatened victim of that domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, provided that the victim member demonstrates the following:

- a. The perpetrator of the domestic violence no longer resides in the assisted unit.
 - b. Applicant/tenant requesting exception based on 3 above shall complete HUD form 50066 within 14 business days after the HA has requested such certification in writing.
 - c. If the applicant/tenant does not provide the certification within 14 business days after the HA has requested such certification in writing, assistance may be terminated.
4. Alerting all rental assistance program participants and tenants residing in Housing Authority owned housing about their obligation to keep rental units free from prohibited criminal activity.
 5. Incorporating the HUD required Tenancy Addendum which includes grounds for termination of tenancy due to criminal activity into all rental leases used by the Housing Authority and requiring the use of said Tenancy Addendum for all private rental property owners in the county.
 6. Conducting workshops for rental property owners and managers to stress the importance of screening potential tenants, inspecting the premises of rental property, and taking action against tenants engaged in criminal activity, fraud, or side payments.
 7. Seeking a collaborative relationship with all law enforcement agencies within the County of Riverside and the Office of Inspector General to assist in the enforcement of this Amended Policy on Zero Tolerance Policy of Criminal Activity.
 8. Screening all housing program applicants and participants through the Consolidated Courts of the County of Riverside online system, Consolidated Courts of the County of San Bernardino online system, Consolidated Courts of the County of Los Angeles online system, any and all available Sex Offender registries, and any other available sources to disclose any criminal background information.
 9. Providing the Riverside County Sheriff Department with requested incident reports from Public Housing properties, to be used by the Crime Analysis unit in identifying crime patterns, series, and other potential problems.